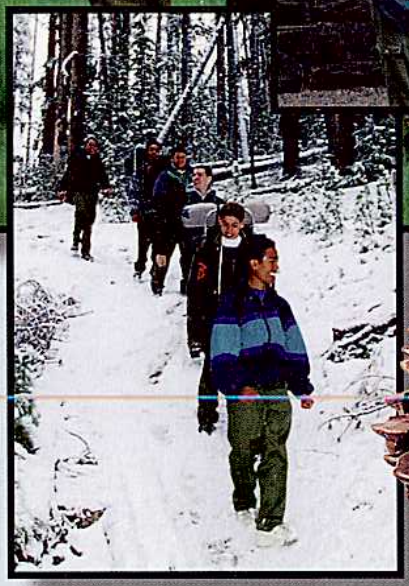
THE SCOUTMASTER HANDBOOK



RECOMMENDED FOR ALL SCOUT LEADERS

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

SCOUTMASTER HANDBOOK

Recommended for all Scout leaders

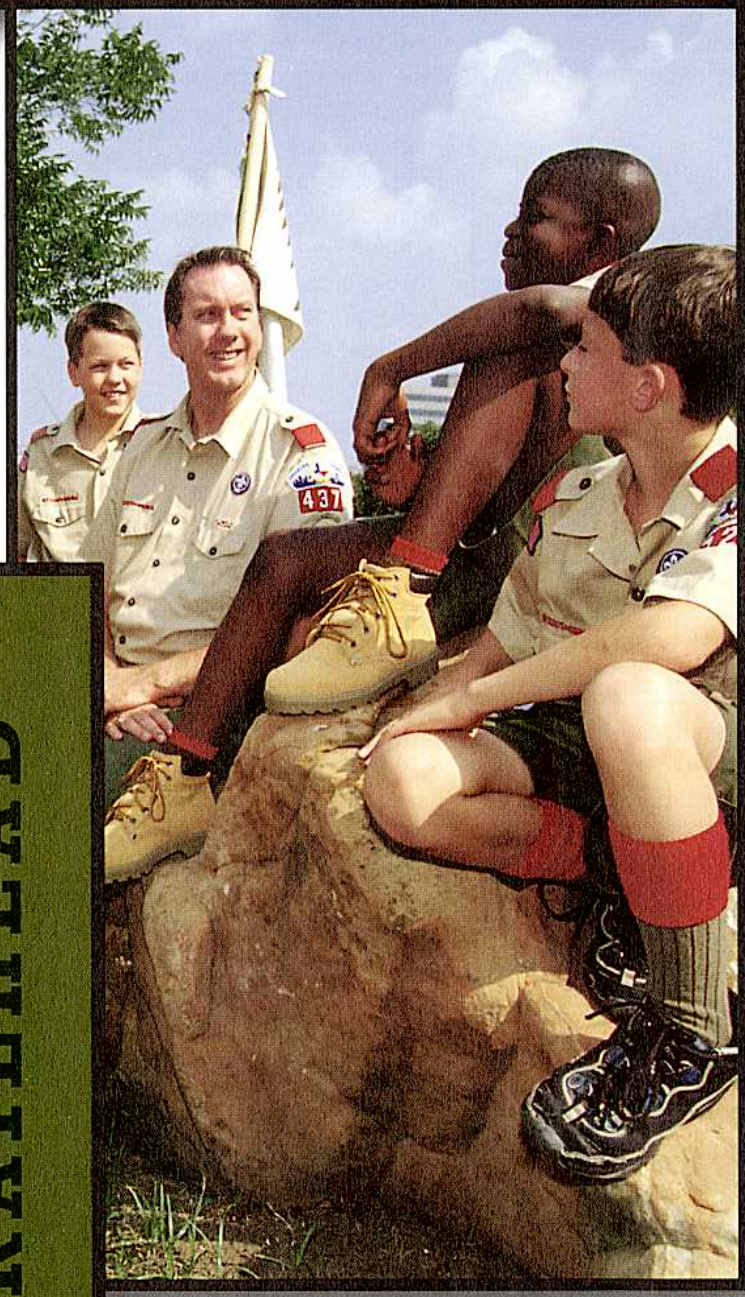
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

33009B
ISBN 0-8395-3009-9
©1998 Boy Scouts of America
2004 Printing

CONTENTS

Chapter	*Page*	*Masthead*
1. Welcome, Scoutmaster!	1	
2. The Adventure of Scouting	5	
3. The Boy-Led Troop	11	
4. The Boy-Led Patrol	19	
5. Troop Meetings	23	
6. Program Features	33	
7. Training Junior Leaders	69	
8. Troop Program Planning	77	
9. The Outdoor Program	83	
10. Advancement	119	
11. Working with Boys	127	
12. Membership	137	
13. Opportunities for Older Scouts	143	
14. Awards and Recognitions	149	
15. The Uniform and Insignia	155	
16. Chartered Organizations and Troop Committees	159	
17. Troop Finances	163	
18. Scoutmaster Support	169	
19. Community Service	175	
20. Resources	180	

WELCOME, SCOUTMASTER!



1 TRAILHEAD

WELCOME, SCOUTMASTER!

CONGRATULATIONS, you are a Scoutmaster! Perhaps you have held that post for years and have figured out most of the details of running a successful Scout troop. Or you might be brand new at this, and are wondering where to begin. Most likely you will fall somewhere in between. In any case, welcome. You are involved in one of the most important and meaningful endeavors of all—that of helping boys develop into good men.

SCOUTMASTER BADGES

People become Scoutmasters for many reasons. Scouting volunteers might have asked you to take the leadership of an existing troop or to be Scoutmaster of a brand-new troop. You might have a son of Scouting age and want to ensure that he and his friends have the best time possible. Maybe you took on the role of Scoutmaster because you remember your own experiences as a Scout and you're eager for a new generation of boys to benefit from the adventure of Scouting. Or, you just like spending time outdoors and want to share with young people the joys of camping and hiking.

The Boy Scouts of America could not exist without your special kind of interest and dedication. In addition, though, Scouting hopes that you will take pride in being a Scoutmaster and that you will find it personally rewarding. Certainly there will be challenges along the way, challenges that will provide great opportunities for growth both for the boys in your troop and for you.

Just as Scouting helps young people become better leaders, serving as a Scoutmaster can teach you plenty about leadership. And just as Scouting helps boys become more capable of dealing with other people, don't be surprised to discover that your time as a Scoutmaster enriches your life in many unexpected ways.

WHAT SCOUTING OFFERS YOU

Scouting's value to young people is clear, but the advantages of Scouting are in no way limited to boys. While Scouts thrive in an environment that grants them opportunities to lead, to learn, and to explore, a Scoutmaster has a ringside seat to watch boys become more confident, more skilled, and better prepared for life as they grow into manhood.

Veteran leaders have fun each and every time they go into the backcountry with boys who are just discovering the excitement of outdoor activities. Scoutmasters new to BSA adventures can learn along with their troop members as they set out on camping and hiking trips. No matter how long your tenure as a Scoutmaster, there is always more to understand about leadership and about young people.

You are not alone in making a troop a success. Many adult volunteers and BSA professionals will help out all along the way. This handbook, the *Boy Scout Handbook*, and other BSA literature can give you insight into ways to do your job. Just as important are the Scouts themselves. The framework of the BSA program gives boys leadership responsibilities that match and strengthen their abilities. You as Scoutmaster make leadership opportunities available for the members of your troop, coach them in their duties, then let them learn how to lead by allowing them to be leaders.

ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTERS

In the absence of the Scoutmaster, an assistant should be designated to fill in as the troop leader. There is no set number of assistant Scoutmasters that a troop should have, but a good measure could be at least one per patrol. Assistant Scoutmasters should be selected and recruited with the same care as that of the Scoutmaster and should complete all training as soon as possible.

The Scoutmaster should assign specific duties to each assistant Scoutmaster. Such an assignment could entail working with a patrol or coordinating troop activities or physical arrangements. The assignments should blend the talents of the assistant Scoutmaster with those of the Scoutmaster. For instance, an assistant Scoutmaster with particularly strong outdoor skills should be assigned to teach those skills to the troop members.

It is the troop committee's responsibility to select and recruit assistant Scoutmasters and the Scoutmaster's job to place and coach new Scoutmasters into positions that best fit the needs of the troop.

ADULT LEADER QUALIFICATIONS

These are the minimum requirements for becoming a Scoutmaster or assistant Scoutmaster:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Be an American citizen.
- Agree to live by the Scout Oath and Law.
- Be approved by a troop's chartered organization. (For more information on the troop committee and the chartered organization, see chapter 16.)

In addition, you should look into your heart and give some real thought to your motivations.

- Do you care about young people? Assuring their well-being physically and emotionally is a basic responsibility of every Scout leader.
- Are you willing to teach boys how to be leaders and then allow them the opportunity to lead? The patrol method developed by Lord Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, Scouting's founder, provides a clear structure in which boys can exercise meaningful leadership.
- Will you serve as a role model for young people? The Scouts in your troop will look up to you for guidance on a number of levels, many of them unspoken. The way you treat others, provide leadership, and act during meetings and on Scout outings will influence Scouts' actions. What you do will be every bit as important as what you say.

If you answer yes to these questions, you're well on your way to being a successful adult leader.

ADULT LEADER TRAINING

New Scoutmasters will find a variety of training courses to bring them up to speed on effective leadership methods. All registered Scout leaders, including assistant Scoutmasters and committee members, are encouraged to take part in the following training opportunities:

Boy Scout Leader Fast Start Training

Fast Start training lays the foundations for new Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and troop committee members. It is a self-study video that addresses: "The Troop Committee," "The Troop Meeting," and "The Outdoor Program." **You should complete Fast Start training before your first troop meeting.**

The Scoutmaster is responsible for training and guiding youth leaders in the operation of the troop, and for managing, training, and supporting his or her assistant Scoutmasters in their role.

SCOUTMASTER AND ASSISTANT SCOUTMASTER LEADER SPECIFIC TRAINING

For Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters, this training is divided into four parts. The first three parts concentrate on troop operation and can be completed in one full day or three evenings. The fourth part, which focuses on outdoor skills, lasts approximately a day and a half, depending on the skill level of the new leader. The leader is considered trained upon completion of New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills.

For troop committee members, Leader Specific training includes the Troop Committee Challenge. By following the *Troop Committee Training Syllabus*, participants can complete the challenge in three hours, after which they are considered trained.

WOOD BADGE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Wood Badge has evolved into the core leadership skills training course for the BSA. The new Wood Badge course focuses on strengthening every volunteer's ability to work with and lead groups of youth and adults and is less focused on outdoor skills, which are more effectively addressed in other courses.

Supplemental Training

Most councils offer additional training for Scout leaders, focusing on outdoor skills, Youth Protection training, and youth leadership development. At the national level, a number of training courses are conducted each summer at the Philmont Training Center in New Mexico. Courses focus on everything from teaching outdoor skills and First Class basics to seminars on troop program planning, merit badge counselor orientation, working with troop committees, and encouraging advancement. For more information on supplemental training, contact your district training committee chair or your local council service center.

SCOUTING IS A GAME WITH A PURPOSE.
FUN is the GAME.
VALUES are the PURPOSE.
LEARNING is the PROCESS.

Once again, welcome. You have accepted a crucial role in the lives of young people. Leading a troop will be challenging, exhilarating, and sometimes frustrating as you help build the future through your Scouts. Your position as Scoutmaster will be recognized by others in your community as one of importance and responsibility. Many Scout leaders look upon the time they've spent with their troops as among their most cherished moments. May your own experience be every bit as rewarding to you and to those with whom you share the adventure of Scouting.

District Roundtable

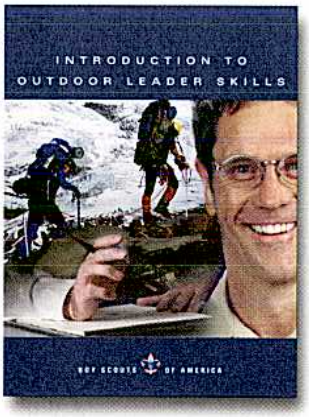
The monthly *roundtable,* conducted by a *roundtable commissioner,* brings together Scout leaders from a number of troops to share ideas and teach skills. Each meeting is also an opportunity for enjoying fellowship, fun, and food with others who are committed to Scouting's aims and ideals.

INTRODUCTION TO OUTDOOR LEADER SKILLS

Outdoor skills are critical to the success of the Scouting program, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills will provide leaders with the basic outdoor skills information needed to start a program right.

Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills is the required outdoor training for all Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and Varsity Scout coaches. The skills taught are based on the outdoor skills found in the *Boy Scout Handbook.*

The course is a day and a half long, but a leader can move at an accelerated pace by demonstrating mastery of a specific skill. The emphasis is on the skill, rather than on attending the course.



Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills, No. 33640

THE ADVENTURE OF SCOUTING

TRAILHEAD

2

THE ADVENTURE OF SCOUTING

It is easier to build a boy than to repair a man.

Boys joining the Boy Scouts of America have high expectations. They can hardly wait to go on hikes, sleep in tents, and cook meals in the open. They are eager to master the skills of Scouting and to put into practice what they are learning. They want to share experiences with their friends. They anticipate challenge, adventure, and recognition for their achievements.

Troop members look to their Scoutmaster as the person who will help them realize the promise of Scouting. They will not be disappointed. That's because Boy Scouting revolves around a boy-led troop. The boys themselves take on leadership positions in order to plan troop activities, run meetings, organize adventures, and take advantage of opportunities that fit their interests and needs.

A Scoutmaster trains boys to be leaders, makes available to them the resources and guidance they need to lead well, and then steps into the background and lets them do their jobs.

With their Scoutmaster's guidance, boys direct much of their energy to a troop's outdoor program—hikes, campouts, and other exciting activities occurring at least once a month. Boys can also challenge themselves to advance through the ranks of Scouting from Tenderfoot all the way to Eagle. For most Scouts, advancement will be a natural outcome of the troop's outdoor program.

Challenge, adventure, leadership, growth—the expectations boys bring to Scouting can be fulfilled. But that won't happen without a Scoutmaster like you to pull together the pieces and make the BSA program available to boys in your area. You are the key to unlocking Scouting's tremendous potential and, along the way, to changing the lives of young people in meaningful ways.

SCOUTING—A VALUES-BASED PROGRAM

Scouting offers boys an environment in which everyone can feel secure both physically and emotionally. That sense of security comes from Scoutmasters and other adult leaders

- Setting an example for themselves and for others by living the Scout Oath and Law to the best of their abilities.
- Refusing to tolerate name-calling, put-downs, discrimination, or any form of physical aggression.
- Communicating their acceptance of boys by taking a real interest in each Scout.
- Using the Scouting program to create a setting based on learning and fun. They seek the best from each Scout and do all they can to allow him to achieve it.

THE AIMS OF SCOUTING

A goal of the Boy Scouts of America is to help boys develop into honorable men. Scouting's values can be incorporated into a boy's home, school, and religious community, adding to all three and, in some cases, filling in where family, school, or religious support is lacking.

Is Scouting educational? You bet it is. Scouts have many opportunities to learn skills of leadership, of the outdoors, and of life. Each boy decides what he will learn and how quickly he will do it. As he progresses, the value of his achievements will be reinforced through recognition—advancement in Scouting's ranks, positions of leadership in the troop, and accomplishments during outdoor adventures.

Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims:

- **Character development**
- **Citizenship training**
- **Mental and physical fitness**

Character Development

Character encompasses a boy's personal qualities, values, and outlook. Scouting strives to help a boy grow in the following ways:

- He becomes confident but is not conceited.
- He is honest with himself and others.
- His personal appearance shows that he respects himself.
- He develops special skills and interests.
- He can take care of himself, especially in emergencies.
- He can be counted upon to do his best, even in difficult situations.
- He practices his religious beliefs.
- He respects other people regardless of their differences.

Character is what you do when no one is looking.

Citizenship Training

The Scouting program allows boys to practice good *citizenship* by living and working among others in a troop with rules based on the common good. Each Scout is further encouraged to do the following:

- Learn about and take pride in his national heritage.
- Develop an understanding of the social, economic, and governmental systems of which he is a part.
- Be of service to others.
- Have knowledge of and respect for cultures and social groups other than his own.
- Be aware of community organizations and their functions.
- Appreciate the environment and seek to protect it.

Mental and Physical Fitness

People get the most out of life when they are *mentally and physically fit*. Scouting motivates each Scout to work toward these goals:

- Improve his general physical condition through exercise and participation in vigorous activities that might include outdoor adventures and sports.
- Eat properly, get enough sleep, and follow other habits for good health.
- Keep his weight within a healthy range.
- Reject experimenting with tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs, or with other activities that can be harmful to himself or others.
- Strive to be mentally alert.
- Use good judgment and make sound decisions.
- Train himself to be resourceful in solving problems.

THE METHODS OF SCOUTING

The Boy Scouts of America uses eight fundamental methods to meet boys' hope for fun and adventure, and to achieve Scouting's aims of encouraging character development, citizenship, and mental and physical fitness. A Scout troop functions best when all eight methods are employed.

The Methods of Scouting

1. **The ideals**
2. **The patrol method**
3. **The outdoors**
4. **Advancement**
5. **Association with adults**
6. **Personal growth**
7. **Leadership development**
8. **The uniform**

Method 1—The Ideals

The ideals of the Boy Scouts of America are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. Boy Scouts and adult leaders incorporating these ideals into their daily lives are said to have *Scout spirit.* Scout meetings and Scouting activities reinforce the ideals of Scouting through the message of a Scoutmaster's Minute and in the form of new understandings the Scouts discover for themselves.

Method 2—The Patrol Method

Within the larger community of the troop, the patrol is a Scout's "family circle." Often made up of boys who are close in age and experience level, each patrol helps its members develop a sense of pride and identity. The boys themselves elect their *patrol leader,* divide up the jobs to be done, and share in the satisfaction of accepting and fulfilling group responsibilities.

Method 3—The Outdoors

Boys join Scouting for the challenge, the excitement, and the fun. Much of Scouting is designed to take place outdoors in settings where boys can find real adventure. Outdoor activities put the sizzle into Scouting. They keep boys coming back for more. A troop with a strong outdoor program is well on its way to finding success in all areas.

Method 4—Advancement

The Boy Scouts of America believes that a boy should receive recognition for his achievements. The requirements for the ranks of Tenderfoot through First Class prepare boys to take full advantage of all that Scouting has to offer. Earning merit badges allows them to explore many fields, helps them round out their skills, and perhaps introduces them to subjects that will become lifelong interests and rewarding careers. In addition, advancement sets a pattern of setting positive goals and reaching them throughout life. Star, Life, and Eagle requirements focus on service to others and developing leadership skills.

As one of the eight methods of Scouting, advancement is a natural outcome of the other seven. A boy whose Scouting experience is introducing him to the BSA ideals, the patrol method, the outdoors, association with adults, personal growth, leadership development, and the uniform will almost certainly find himself moving steadily along the BSA's advancement trail.

Method 5—Association With Adults

Boys learn a great deal by watching how adults conduct themselves. Scout leaders can be positive role models for the members of their troops. In many cases a Scoutmaster who is willing to listen to boys, encourage them, and take a sincere interest in them can make a profound difference in their lives.

Method 6—Personal Growth

Scout-age boys are experiencing dramatic physical and emotional growth. Scouting offers them opportunities to channel much of that change into productive endeavors and to find the answers they are seeking for many of their questions. Through service projects and Good Turns, Scouts can discover their place in their community. Many Scouting activities allow boys to associate with boys from different backgrounds. The religious emblems program offers pathways for Scouts to more deeply understand their place in the world. The troop itself provides each Scout with an arena in which to explore, to try out new ideas, and sometimes simply to embark on adventures with no design other than having a good time with good people.

Method 7—Leadership Development

Leadership is a skill that can be learned only by doing it. Every boy in a patrol and troop will find that he is filling leadership positions of increasing responsibility. Through leadership experiences, boys learn planning, organization, and decision making. For many boys, accepting the role of patrol leader is the first real leadership opportunity they have ever had. Discovering that they can do the job will go a long way toward giving them the confidence and ability to be leaders in the future.

In Scouting, boys learn to be effective leaders . . . and to be good followers.

Method 8—The Uniform

Since 1910, the Boy Scout uniform has been a recognizable part of the American scene. Wearing the uniform helps boys develop a sense of belonging to their patrol and troop. It reinforces the fact that all members of the BSA are equal to one another. People seeing a boy in a Scout uniform expect someone of good character who is prepared to the best of his ability to help those around him. Likewise, Scoutmasters in full uniform set a good example for members of their troops and are also seen as community leaders fulfilling a very important role.

"But the real way to get happiness is by giving out happiness to other people. Try and leave this world a little better than you found it and when your turn comes to die, you can die happy in feeling that at any rate you have not wasted your time but have done your best. 'Be prepared' in this way to live happy and die happy—stick to your Scout Promise always—even after you have ceased to be a boy—and God help you do it."

—Excerpt from a farewell letter written by Robert Baden-Powell to the Scouts of the world

TEACHING LIFE SKILLS IN A VALUES-BASED ENVIRONMENT

Scouting is a values-based program with its own code of conduct. The Scout Oath and Law help instill the values of good conduct and honesty. A boy who spends one year in a Scout troop will learn lifetime skills. He will learn basic outdoor skills, first aid, citizenship training, leadership skills, self-reliance, and how to get along with others. Scouting will prepare him to live a more productive and fulfilling life.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Scout Motto

BE PREPARED.

Scout Slogan

DO A GOOD TURN DAILY.

Scout Oath or Promise

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law

A SCOUT IS:

TRUSTWORTHY

LOYAL

HELPFUL

FRIENDLY

COURTEOUS

KIND

OBEDIENT

CHEERFUL

THRIFTY

BRAVE

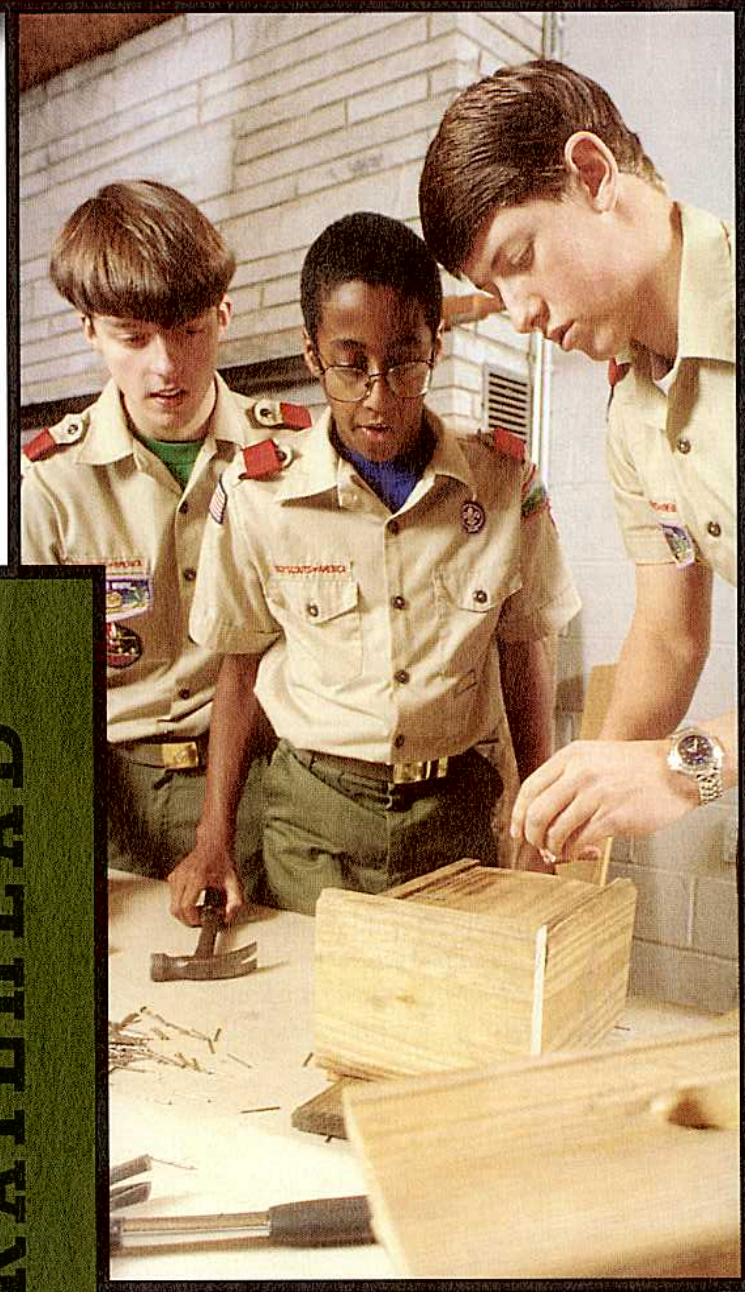
CLEAN

REVERENT

3

TRAILHEAD

THE BOY-LED TROOP



THE BOY-LED TROOP

EMPOWERING BOYS TO BE LEADERS is the core of Scouting. Scouts learn by doing, and what they do is lead their patrols and their troop. The boys themselves develop a troop's program, then take responsibility for figuring out how they will achieve their goals.

One of your most important challenges as Scoutmaster is to train boy leaders to run the troop by providing direction, coaching, and support. They will make mistakes now and then and will rely upon you to guide them. But only through real hands-on experience as leaders can boys learn to lead.

Some Scoutmasters struggle with the idea of allowing boys to lead the troop. They wonder whether a boy of 12 can keep a patrol in order or if a 14-year-old senior patrol leader can organize and manage a successful troop meeting. In the short term it might seem easier for adults to make all of the decisions and direct the action. However, when you invest your energy in training boys to run the show, you will find that you can watch with great satisfaction as junior leaders thrive in fulfilling the responsibilities they have been given. Your time will have been spent productively, and the boys in your troop will be getting the full measure of the Scouting program.

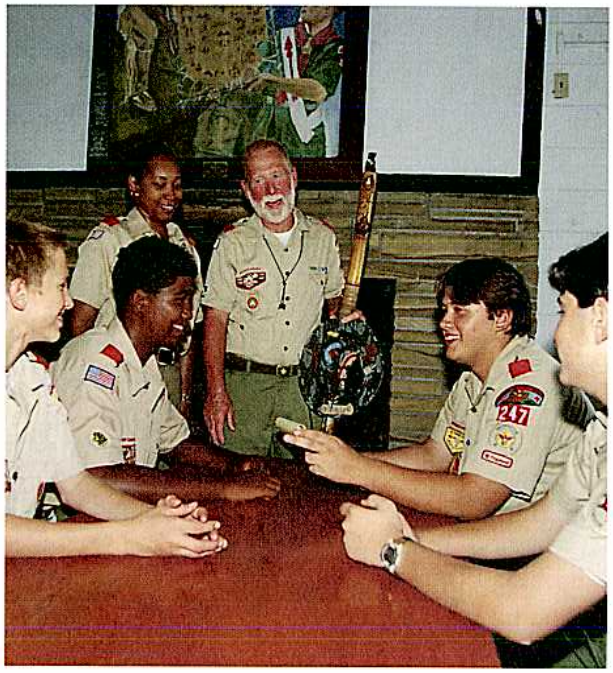
Each time Scouts are formed into a new group, whether it is a new patrol or a patrol leaders' council, the Scoutmaster must evaluate the skills, abilities, and morale level of the newly formed group, then provide direction, coaching, and support based on that evaluation.

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists; not so good when people obey and acclaim him; worst when they despise him. But a good leader who talks little when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say 'we did it ourselves.'"

—Chinese philosopher Sun-Tsu

LEADERS OF THE BOY-LED TROOP

A Boy Scout troop is a small democracy. With the Scoutmaster's direction, the boys are formed into patrols, plan the troop's program, and make it a reality.



In order for that to happen, a troop relies upon Scouts serving in positions of responsibility. The key boy leaders of the troop make up the *patrol leaders' council.* They are the senior patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, patrol leaders, and troop guides of any new-Scout patrols. (For a detailed description of each position, see the *Senior Patrol Leader Handbook.)*

Senior Patrol Leader

The junior leader with the most responsibility in a troop is the *senior patrol leader.* He is elected by all members of the troop. Each troop sets its own requirements and schedule of elections, though senior patrol leaders are usually chosen at six- to 12-month intervals and can be reelected. During a Scout's tenure as senior patrol leader, he is not a member of a patrol.

The senior patrol leader of an established troop is often selected from among experienced Scouts of a certain age and rank. In a new troop or a troop without older members, boys are still likely to choose a Scout whom they respect and believe will provide the best leadership. The patrol leaders' council might offer an opportunity for those in the running to make short presentations to the troop, explaining their qualifications and reasons for seeking the office. This provides good practice for the candidates and enables those who do not know them well, younger Scouts in particular, to gain a better sense of what they propose to do for the troop.

The senior patrol leader is in charge of troop meetings from beginning to end. He chairs meetings of the patrol leaders' council as they plan troop activities and programs. In short, the senior patrol leader's job is to see that the troop runs in an orderly and timely manner. To help the senior patrol leader achieve that leadership goal, you as Scoutmaster should work with him before and after troop meetings to mentor him, encourage him, and provide him with the tools to succeed. You might want to meet with him at other times, too, in order to discuss issues that will enhance his ability to lead the troop and improve the quality of experience the Scouts are enjoying.

The relationship between a senior patrol leader and his Scoutmaster is often one of friendship and mutual admiration. A great reward for a Scoutmaster is in helping a young man who has accepted a position of responsibility develop into a leader capable of fulfilling the high expectations placed upon him.

Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

With the approval of the Scoutmaster, the *assistant senior patrol leader* is appointed by the senior patrol leader, serves as his assistant, and takes his place when the senior patrol leader is absent. Among his specific responsibilities are training and providing direction for the troop quartermaster, scribe, Order of the Arrow troop representative, historian, librarian, and instructors. During his tenure as assistant senior patrol leader, the Scout is not a member of a patrol. Large troops may have more than one assistant senior patrol leader.

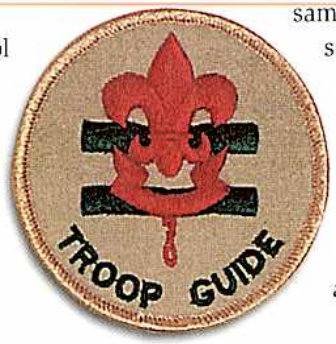
Patrol Leaders

One *patrol leader* is elected by the members of each patrol. He takes responsibility for the patrol's activities and represents the patrol as a member of the patrol leaders' council. Each patrol leader appoints an assistant patrol leader to serve with him. (For more on patrol leaders and assistant patrol leaders, see chapter 4, "The Boy-Led Patrol.")

Venture Patrol Leader

A Venture patrol is a group of older Scouts within the troop. Elected by members of his patrol, the *Venture patrol leader* helps his patrol get the most out of high-adventure experiences and sports activities. (For more on Venture patrols, see chapter 13, "Opportunities for Older Scouts.")

Troop Guide



The *troop guide* is both a leader and a "mentor" to the members of a new-Scout patrol. He is an older Scout, at least First Class in rank, who helps the patrol leader of a new-Scout patrol in much the same way that a Scoutmaster works with a senior patrol leader—providing direction, coaching, and support as determined by the skill level and morale of the patrol leader and members of the new-Scout patrol. The troop guide is usually not a member of another patrol, but may participate in the high-adventure activities of a Venture patrol.

THE PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The *patrol leaders' council* (PLC) plans and runs the troop's program and activities and gives long-range direction with an annual program planning conference that lays out the troop's calendar for the coming year. Composed of the youth leaders listed above, the patrol leaders' council also meets each month to fine-tune upcoming troop meetings and outings. They might also get together briefly after each troop meeting to review the plans for the next troop meeting and make any adjustments to ensure its success. (For more on the annual program planning conference, see chapter 8, "Troop Program Planning.")

Meetings of the patrol leaders' council are conducted by the senior patrol leader. Patrol leaders and troop guides present the ideas and concerns of their patrols, then take the council's decisions to the rest of the troop members.

The Scoutmaster attends patrol leaders' council meetings as a coach and an informational resource. As much as possible, a Scoutmaster allows the boys to run the meetings and make the decisions, stepping in with suggestions and guidance when that will enhance the program for the troop, the patrols, and individual boys. The Scoutmaster and troop committee retain veto power over decisions of the patrol leaders' council, but should need to exercise it only on rare occasions when the plans of the patrol leaders' council would violate BSA policy or could lead to a situation that might jeopardize the safety and well-being of troop members.

OTHER TROOP POSITIONS

Depending upon the size and needs of a troop, any or all of the following positions may be filled. Unless otherwise indicated, the senior patrol leader selects the Scout who will hold each position. The Scoutmaster can help the senior patrol leader make his decisions on the basis of candidates' overall qualifications rather than merely on friendships. Scouts serving in any of the following troop positions will also continue to be active members of their patrols:

Quartermaster

The *quartermaster* is the supply and equipment boss. He keeps a current inventory of troop equipment and sees that it is in good condition. He works with patrol quartermasters as they check out equipment and return it, and reports to the patrol leaders' council on equipment in need of replacement or repair. In carrying out his responsibilities, he may work closely with a member of the troop committee.

Scribe

The *scribe* is the troop's secretary. He attends meetings of the patrol leaders' council and keeps a logbook of their discussions, but is not a voting member. During troop meetings he records attendance and dues payments and maintains troop advancement records. He may be assigned to a member of the troop committee to help him with his work.

Order of the Arrow Troop Representative

The *Order of the Arrow troop (or team) representative* serves as a communication link between the troop and the local Order of the Arrow lodge or chapter. By enhancing the image of the Order as a service arm to the troop, he promotes the OA in the troop while encouraging year-round and resident camping in the troop and participation of older

Scouts in high-adventure programs. The OA troop representative assists with leadership skills training in the troop and supports fellow Arrowmen who undertake leadership roles in the troop. He reports to the assistant senior patrol leader.

Historian

The *historian* collects and preserves troop photographs, news stories, trophies, flags, scrapbooks, awards, and other memorabilia. He might also collect and organize information about former Scouts and leaders and make materials available for Scouting activities, media contacts, and troop history projects.

Librarian

The troop *librarian* oversees the care and use of troop books, pamphlets, magazines, audiovisuals, and merit badge counselor lists. He checks out these materials to Scouts and leaders and maintains records to ensure that everything is returned. He may also suggest the acquisition of new literature and report on the need to repair or replace any current holdings.

Instructor

Each *instructor* is an older troop member proficient both in a Scouting skill and in the ability to teach that skill to others. First aid, camping, backpacking—the subjects can encompass any of the areas that Scouts will want to master, especially those required for outdoor activities and rank advancement. A troop may have more than one instructor.

Chaplain Aide

The *chaplain aide* assists the troop chaplain (usually an adult from the troop committee or the chartered organization) in religious services for the troop. He sees that religious holidays are considered during program planning and promotes the religious emblems program.

Den Chief

A *den chief* works with a den of Cub Scouts and with their adult den leader. He assists with den meetings, encourages Cub Scout advancement, and serves as a role model for younger boys. Serving as den chief can be a great first leadership experience for a Scout.

Webelos Den Chief

A *Webelos den chief* meets each week with a Webelos den and helps their adult leader guide Webelos Scouts in their program. He can plan and assist with den meetings and field activities, lead songs and stunts, and encourage Webelos Scouts to progress into the Scout troop.

Junior Assistant Scoutmaster

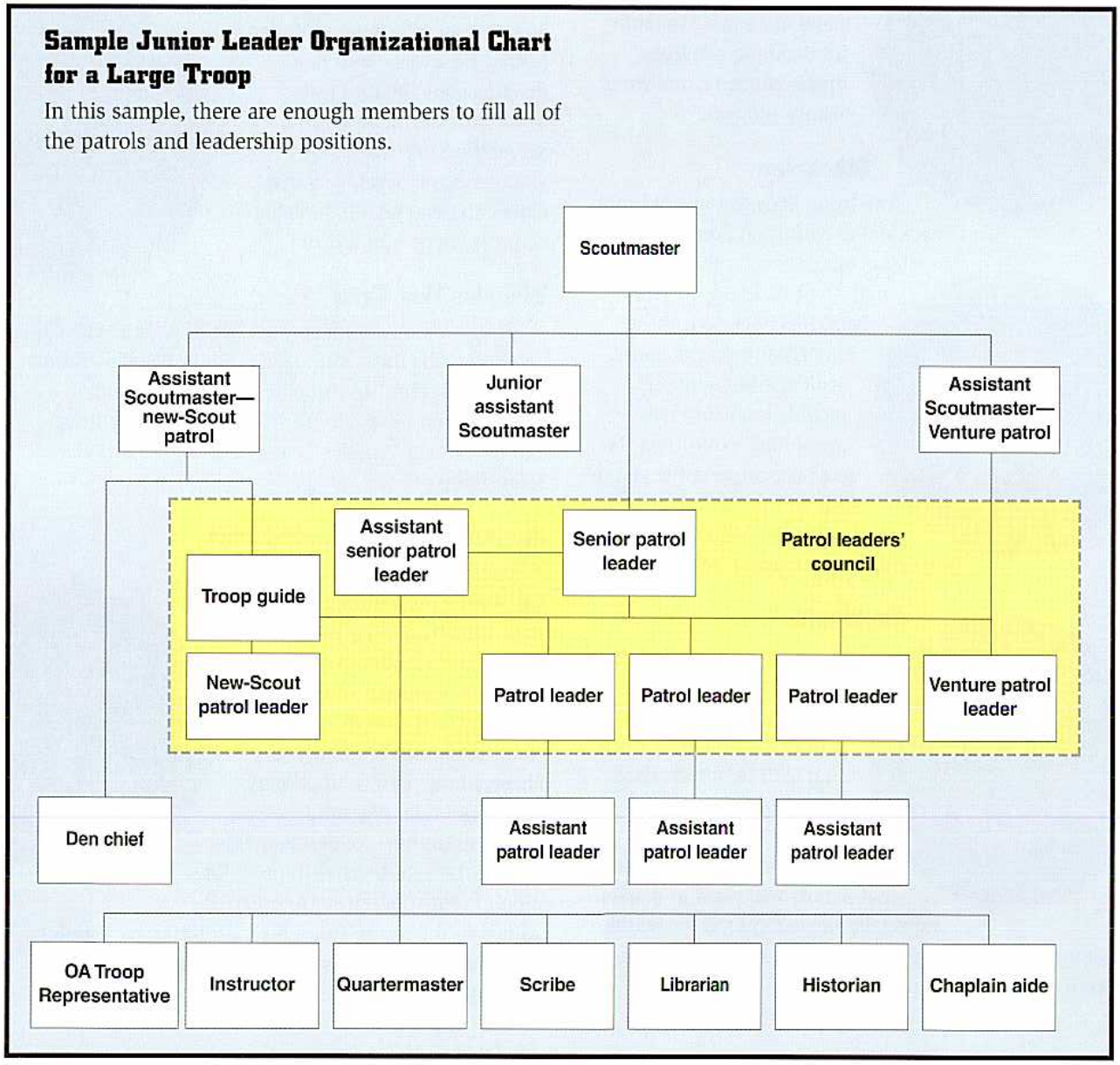
A Scout at least 16 years of age who has shown outstanding leadership skills may be appointed by the senior patrol leader, with the advice and consent of the Scoutmaster, to serve as a *junior assistant Scoutmaster.* These young men (a troop may have more than one junior assistant Scoutmaster) follow the guidance of the Scoutmaster in providing support and supervision to other boy leaders in the troop. Upon his 18th birthday, a junior assistant Scoutmaster will be eligible to become an assistant Scoutmaster.

TROOP JUNIOR LEADER ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

Troops come in many sizes. Those that are just starting out or that are in small towns might not have many members, but boys filling the most vital leadership positions can still put the Scouting program into action. As troop membership grows, additional leadership positions can be filled until the full roster of leaders is complete.

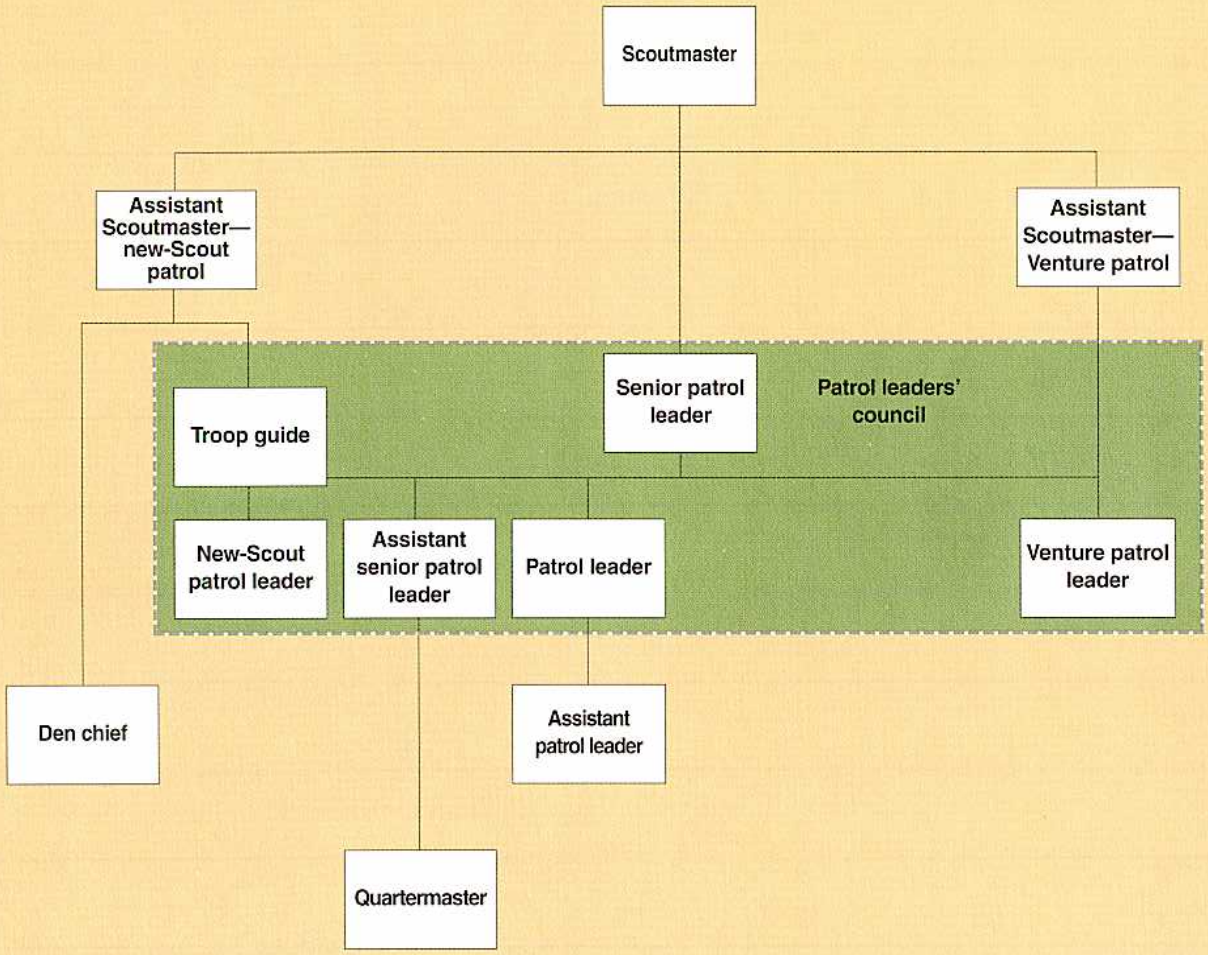
Sample Junior Leader Organizational Chart for a Large Troop

In this sample, there are enough members to fill all of the patrols and leadership positions.



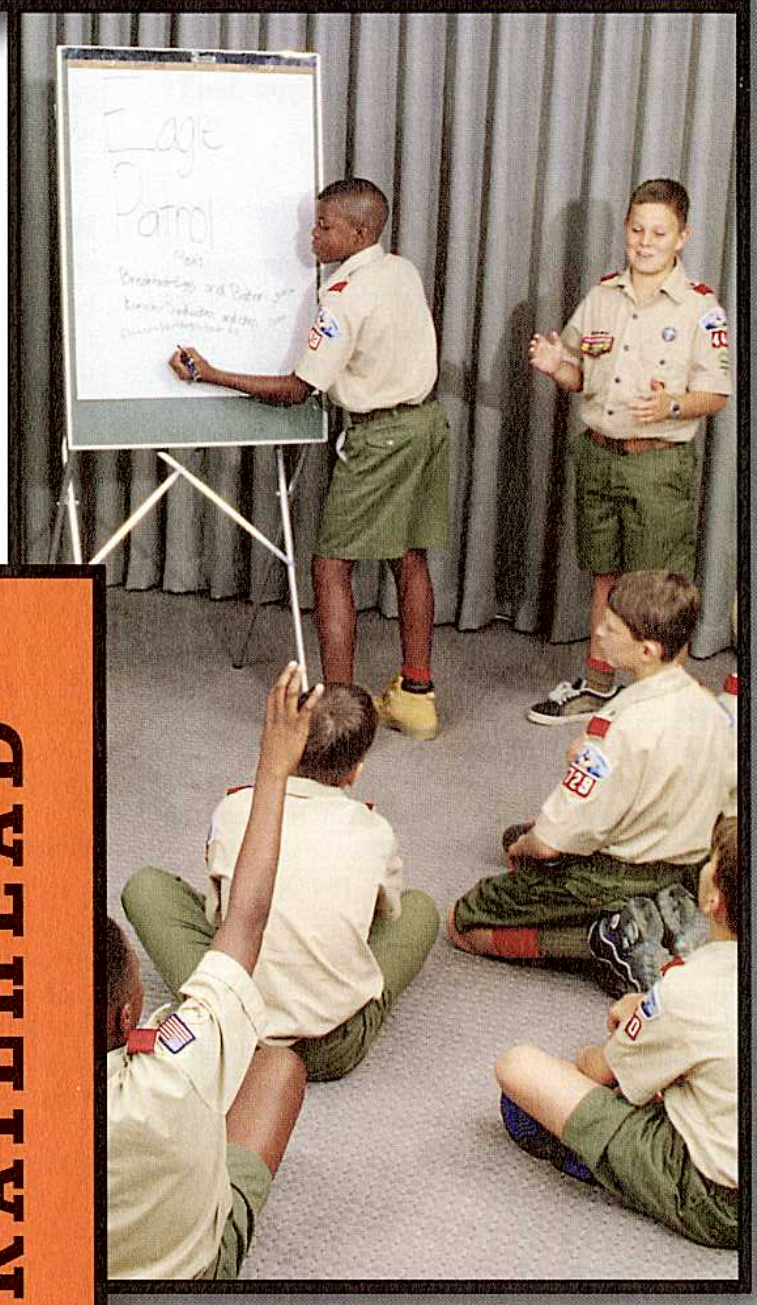
Sample Junior Leader Organizational Chart for a Small Troop

As more boys join, more patrols can be formed and more leadership positions filled.



NOTES

THE BOY-LED PATROL



TRAILHEAD

4

THE BOY-LED PATROL

"The patrol method is not *a* way to operate a Boy Scout troop, it is the *only* way. Unless the patrol method is in operation you don't really have a Boy Scout troop."

—Robert Baden-Powell

Patrols are the building blocks of a Boy Scout troop. A patrol is a small group of boys who are more or less similar in age, development, and interests. Working together as a team, patrol members share the responsibility of making the patrol a success. They gain confidence by serving in positions of patrol leadership. All enjoy the friendship, sense of belonging, and achievements of the patrol and of each of its members.

Patrol size depends upon a troop's total enrollment and the needs of its members, though an ideal patrol size is eight. That size is appropriate not only for effective patrol and troop meetings, but also for hiking and camping without leaving a trace. New-Scout patrols are sometimes smaller, allowing the flexibility for patrol members to invite friends to become Scouts and join their patrol. However, patrols with fewer than five members are seldom very efficient. (For more on Leave No Trace camping and hiking and the importance of group size, see chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program.")

Each patrol selects a name for itself, decides on a yell, and designs a flag. A patrol takes pride in its own identity, and its members strive to make theirs the best patrol possible. While they see their patrol as their home in Scouting, they often cooperate with other patrols during troop games, adventures, and opportunities to learn skills and to complete requirements for advancement.

There are three kinds of patrols—*regular patrols, new-Scout patrols,* and *Venture patrols.* What number and kinds of patrols a troop has depends upon the ages of the Scouts, their interests, and their needs. Patrols are also sometimes organized according to the neighborhoods in which boys live.

Regular Patrols

Regular patrols usually are composed of Scouts who have completed the First Class requirements or who are in at least the seventh grade. They are groups of peers similar in age, achievement, and interests. Most of them have been around Scouting long enough to be comfortable with patrol and troop routines, and are well versed in camping, hiking, cooking, and Scouting's other basic skills.

New-Scout Patrols

Many troops have a *new-Scout patrol* for 11-year-old boys who are just joining. The new Scouts function together as a patrol during their first year in the troop, working toward their goal of completing the requirements for the First Class rank. Some troops phase their new Scouts into regular patrols after three to six months.

An older, experienced Scout will be appointed by the senior patrol leader, with the advice and consent of the assistant Scoutmaster, to serve as troop guide for the new-Scout patrol. The troop guide helps new Scouts through the early challenges of troop membership. An assistant Scoutmaster should work closely with the troop guide and the new-Scout patrol to ensure that each Scout has every opportunity to succeed right from the start.

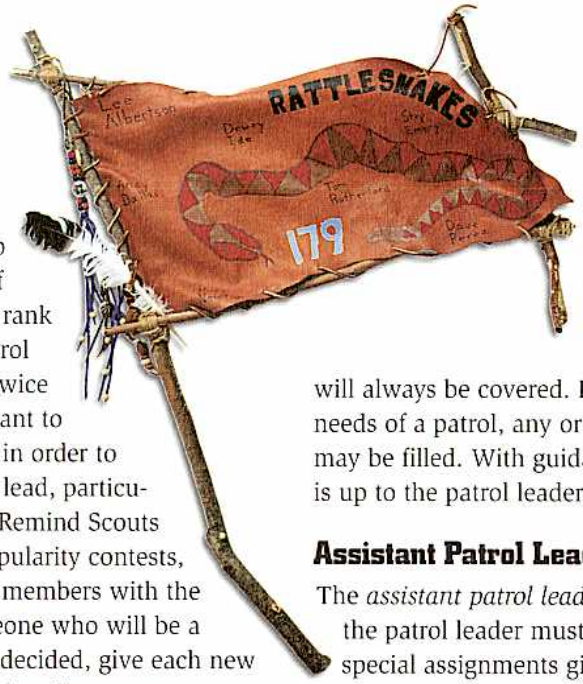
Venture Patrols

A *Venture patrol* is an *optional* older-boy patrol (ages 13 through 17) within a troop. These boys have the maturity and experience to plan and take part in more challenging high-adventure outings and sports activities. An assistant Scoutmaster assigned to the Venture patrol can help the Venture patrol leader and other patrol members transform their plans into action.

A Venture patrol can be a valuable tool for keeping older boys interested and active in Scouting. About half of all troops currently incorporate one or more Venture patrols in their programs. Every troop with older boys should strongly consider establishing a Venture patrol. (For more on Venture patrols, see chapter 13, "Opportunities for Older Scouts.")

"The object of the patrol method is not so much saving the Scoutmaster trouble as to give responsibility to the boy."

—Robert Baden-Powell

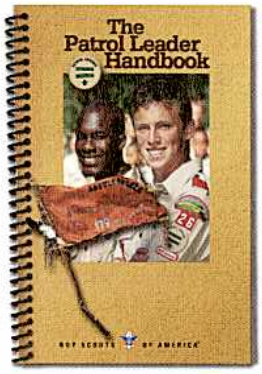


PATROL LEADERS

The members of each patrol elect one of their own to serve as their *patrol leader.* The troop determines the requirements, if any, for patrol leaders, such as rank and age. Most troops select patrol leaders and other boy leaders twice a year, though a troop might want to hold elections more frequently in order to allow more boys the chance to lead, particularly in the new-Scout patrols. Remind Scouts that patrol elections are not popularity contests, but that they do present patrol members with the responsibility of selecting someone who will be a good leader. Once a patrol has decided, give each new patrol leader all the support and guidance you can. Even a boy who at first seems an unlikely choice might develop quickly into an effective leader.

Some of a patrol leader's responsibilities follow:

- Take a leading role in planning and conducting patrol meetings and activities.
- Encourage patrol members to complete advancement requirements.
- Represent the patrol as a member of the patrol leaders' council.
- Set a good example by living up to the Scout Oath and Law.



The *Patrol Leader Handbook,* No. 32502, contains an overview of a patrol leader's opportunities and responsibilities.

Becoming a patrol leader is often a boy's first experience with real leadership, so it is important to conduct training for new leaders as soon as possible after each troop election. (For guidance on planning and carrying out junior leader training, see chapter 7, "Training Junior Leaders.")

"Scouting is a game for boys under the leadership of boys under the direction of a man."

—Robert Baden-Powell

OTHER PATROL POSITIONS

All members of a patrol work together to make things happen. Different patrol offices ensure that certain areas of responsibility will always be covered. Depending on the size and needs of a patrol, any or all of the following positions may be filled. With guidance from his Scoutmaster, it is up to the patrol leader to select a Scout for each job.

Assistant Patrol Leader

The *assistant patrol leader* steps in to serve whenever the patrol leader must be absent. He may carry out special assignments given him by the patrol leader—working with patrol members on advancement, for example.

Patrol Scribe

The *scribe* is the patrol's secretary. He checks attendance, keeps the patrol logbook current, collects and records patrol dues, and helps prepare budgets for outings.

Patrol Quartermaster

The *quartermaster* maintains an inventory of the patrol's equipment and makes sure it is clean and ready for the patrol to use.

Patrol Grubmaster

The *grubmaster* is in charge of assisting the patrol in putting together menus for hikes and campouts. He takes the lead in making all food-related arrangements for the patrol's outdoor programs.

Patrol Cheermaster

The *cheermaster* leads the patrol in songs, yells, and stunts during meetings and evening campout programs.

PATROL MEETINGS

Patrol meetings may be held at any time and place. Many troops set aside a portion of each troop meeting for the patrols to gather. Others encourage patrols to meet on a different evening from that of the troop meeting, often at the home of one of the patrol members. Some patrols meet during the hour before the troop meeting, conduct their business, sometimes share a meal, then go together to the troop meeting site for the gathering of all the patrols.

Every patrol meeting should be well planned and businesslike. Typically the patrol leader calls the meeting to order, the scribe collects dues, the assistant patrol leader reports on advancement, and the patrol leader reports from the latest patrol leaders' council meeting any information patrol members should know about.

The bulk of a patrol meeting can be devoted to planning upcoming outings and troop activities. To prepare the patrol for those events, the patrol leader may assign specific tasks to each Scout. (For more on patrol meetings, see the *Patrol Leader Handbook.)*

PATROL ACTIVITIES

Most patrol activities take place within the framework of the troop. However, patrols may also set out on day hikes, service projects, and overnighters independent of the troop and free of adult leadership as long as they follow two rules:

- The Scoutmaster approves the patrol activity.
- The patrol activity does not interfere with any troop function.

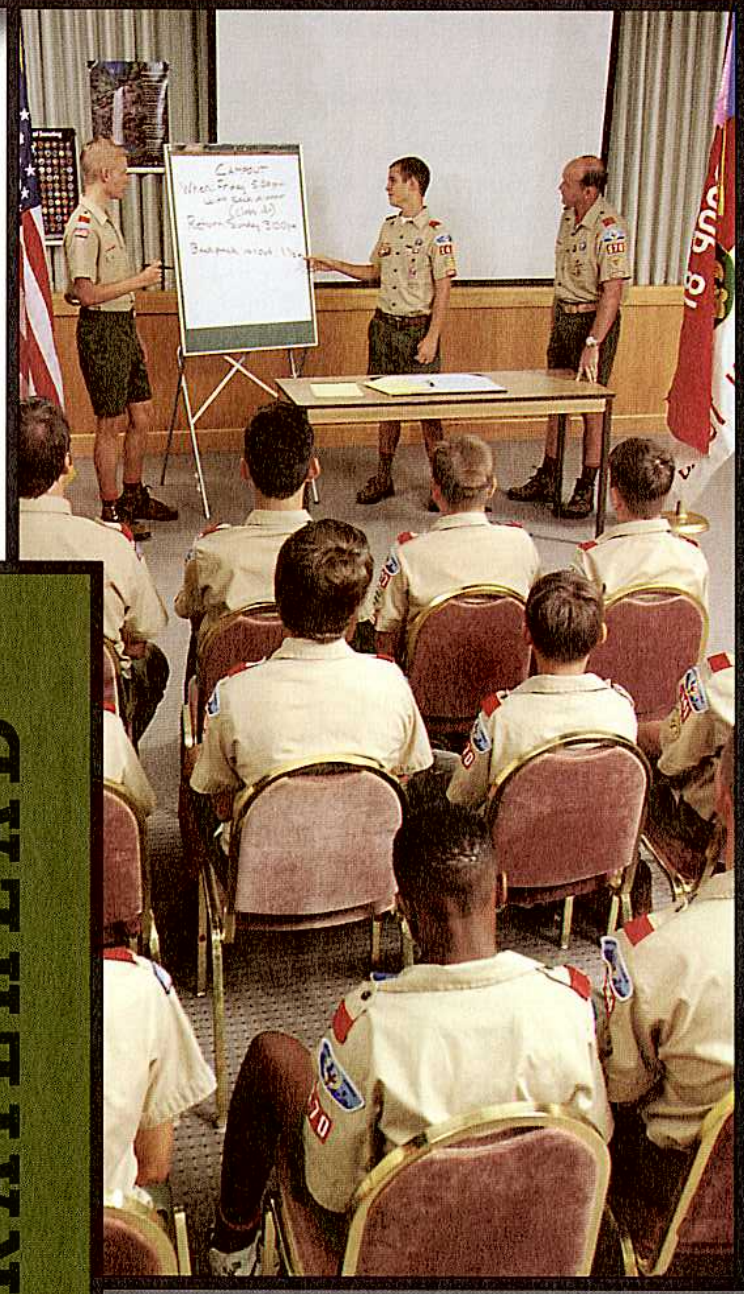
A patrol activity without adult supervision should be allowed only when it has been thoroughly planned and the Scoutmaster is satisfied that the activity is well within the patrol members' levels of training and responsibility. If the Scoutmaster has any doubts, he should encourage the patrol to reconsider its plans, or should assign adults to accompany the patrol during the activity in question.

PATROL NAMES

The Bears, the Ravens, the Hawks. Every patrol takes great pride in the name of their patrol. In some instances, a patrol name will hold traditional or historical significance in a troop. Patrols should be encouraged to put their name and emblem on their patrol equipment. The BSA National Supply Division offers 39 different emblems, as well as a blank emblem for patrols who want to design their own. (For a complete listing of the patrol names and emblems, see the *Insignia Guide.)*

National Honor Patrol Award
The National Honor Patrol Award is given to patrols whose members make an extra effort to have the best patrol possible. A patrol can earn the award by doing the following over a period of three months:
1. Have a patrol name, flag, and yell. Put the patrol design on equipment and use the patrol yell. Keep patrol records up to date.
2. Hold two patrol meetings every month.
3. Take part in at least one hike, outdoor activity, or other Scouting event.
4. Complete two Good Turns or service projects approved by the patrol leaders' council.
5. Help two patrol members advance one rank.
6. Wear the full uniform correctly at troop activities (at least 75 percent of the patrol's membership).
7. Have a representative attend at least three patrol leaders' council meetings.
8. Have eight members in the patrol or experience an increase in patrol membership.

TROOP MEETINGS



TRAILHEAD

5

TROOP MEETINGS

"Every Tuesday afternoon, since I was 11 years old, I get excited because I know I have a Scout meeting to go to that night."

—Mike Lanning, Scoutmaster for 50 years (Troop 223, Saint Matthew Episcopal Church, Pacific Palisades, California)

The weekly meeting is the glue that holds a Scout troop together. Well-planned meetings that the boys run themselves can be full of excitement and satisfaction. Troop meeting time devoted to learning new skills and organizing future campouts, service projects, and other activities will keep interest levels and enthusiasm high.

Troop meetings serve many purposes, including these:

- **Motivating boys.** From the Scouts' point of view, troop meetings are chances for them to get together with their friends for fun and adventure. For Scoutmasters, meetings offer many avenues to encourage Scouts to learn, to advance, and to improve themselves.
- **Strengthening patrols.** Patrols have opportunities at troop meetings to meet together, to learn as a team, and to share what they know. Whether they serve as the honor guard during an opening flag ceremony, as the presenters of a Scouting skill, or as the organizers of a game or activity, every patrol can contribute to every troop meeting.
- **Promoting patrol spirit.** Troop meetings offer ideal settings for patrols to take part in contests and competitions that test their abilities and their expertise at cooperating with one another.

- **Learning and practicing Scouting skills.** A portion of a troop meeting can be devoted to demonstrating and practicing skills that will enhance the Scouts' ability to hike, camp, and complete requirements for higher ranks.
- **Exercising leadership.** The Scouts themselves take leading roles in planning, conducting, and assessing the success of troop meetings. Leadership is a skill that can be learned only by leading, and troop meetings serve as regular occasions for that to happen.

PLANNING TROOP MEETINGS

Troops get together every week for a meeting, an activity, or a combination of the two. Meetings should occur at the same time every week so that boys and their families can schedule efficiently. However, if a troop has a campout or other weekend activity, the patrol leaders' council may sometimes decide to forego a meeting the following week.

Except for the Scoutmaster's Minute during the closing, each section of a troop meeting is the responsibility of the Scouts themselves. With the guidance of the Scoutmaster, troop meetings are planned well in advance by the senior patrol leader and the patrol leaders' council. The senior patrol leader can assign patrols or individuals to take care of various portions of a meeting, giving as many Scouts as possible the opportunity to contribute. The "Seven-Step Troop Meeting Plan" shown here provides the framework for efficient, well-run meetings.

Seven-Step Troop Meeting Plan
1. Preopening
2. Opening ceremony
3. Skills instruction
4. Patrol meetings
5. Interpatrol activity
6. Closing—Scoutmaster's Minute
7. After the meeting

_____
(Program feature)

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week** _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts • Experienced Scouts • Older Scouts		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes			
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes			
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	Scoutmaster's Minute	SM	
After the Meeting			

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE TROOP MEETINGS

1. Troop meetings must have **variety, action,** and **purpose**.
   a. **Variety.** Don't get in the same old rut. Help the senior patrol leader mix in surprises now and then—a special visitor, for example, a fresh activity, or perhaps a chance for the troop to make homemade ice cream. Keep a file of resources and ideas that can add spice to meetings.
   b. **Action.** Boys spend much of their day sitting in school. Get them out of their chairs at troop meetings. Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class Scouts should be involved in learning basic Scout skills. Keep in mind that all Scouts, regardless of their age or experience level, should be active participants, not just observers.
   c. **Purpose.** Troop meetings should be built around a purpose; for example, helping Scouts prepare for an upcoming activity or event.
2. Many meetings can and should take place outdoors.
3. The patrol that was assigned the previous week to be this week's service patrol should arrive early enough to prepare the room or outdoor area for the troop meeting. At the end of the meeting it is the service patrol's responsibility to put everything away and return the meeting space to its original condition.
4. The senior patrol leader is in charge of every troop meeting. Help him plan ahead, coach him along the way, but stay in the background and let him be the leader.
5. Encourage the senior patrol leader to start and end meetings on time. Ninety minutes is an ideal maximum.
6. You and the junior leaders can use the Scout sign any time the troop must come to order, especially when shifting from one part of a meeting to another. Keep it effective by using it sparingly.
7. Don't wear out activities the Scouts enjoy. If the troop has a favorite game, keep things lively by alternating it with other games now and then rather than relying on the same one every week.
8. During the planning stages of skills instruction, remind instructors that demonstrations are most persuasive when they *show* rather than simply *tell*. If a troop instructor is going to explain how to load and carry a backpack, he should bring the gear and the pack to the meeting.
9. Hands-on experience is an especially effective method of teaching. Coach instructors on the importance of involving Scouts as participants in skills instruction, not simply observers. Plan ahead. Will a patrol need a plant identification book for nature study? Will each Scout need a length of rope to learn a new knot? Instructors should get in the habit of gathering their materials ahead of time.
10. Coach junior leaders to keep meetings moving at a fast pace. If an activity or project is not working well, suggest that the boy leaders end it and move on to the next item of the meeting plan.
11. Keep the length of the Scoutmaster's Minute to not much more than just that—a minute. Just as you ask junior leaders to plan well for efficient meetings, give some thought ahead of time as to how you will manage the closing of the meeting.
12. End the meeting on time. Leave the boys wanting more and they will be eager to return the next week.
13. Unless they have been invited to take part in a specific part of a meeting, visitors should be observers only. Don't allow them to disrupt the flow of events.
14. The recognition and encouragement Scouts receive from their Scoutmaster is a crucial part of their development. At every meeting, find something positive to praise about each patrol—well-planned presentations, proper uniforming, a good opening ceremony, or even something as simple as arriving on time.
15. Support junior leaders in a positive manner during meetings. If you feel the need to correct or criticize, save your thoughts until after the meeting and then find a productive way of teaching boy leaders how to be more effective.

1. Preopening

As boys begin to arrive for a troop meeting, the senior patrol leader (or an older Scout assigned by the senior patrol leader) should get them involved in a game or project designed so that additional Scouts can join in as they show up. The preopening is often well suited for the outdoors. The person in charge of the preopening activity should be ready to start about fifteen minutes before the scheduled beginning of the meeting.

While the preopening activity is going on, Scouts whose patrol has been assigned to serve that week as the *service patrol* should be preparing the meeting room or area—setting up equipment, arranging chairs, and doing whatever else must be done ahead of time.

2. Opening Ceremony (5 Minutes)

The senior patrol leader calls the meeting to order at the appointed time, instructing Scouts to line up in formation by patrols. A patrol responsible for the opening might conduct a flag ceremony and then lead troop members in reciting the Scout Oath and Law. The opening should be varied from week to week to keep things lively.

3. Skills Instruction (15–20 Minutes)

This part of the meeting might focus on skills Scouts will need in order to fully participate in an upcoming activity, or upon skills they must have to complete requirements for advancement. A troop with boys of about the same experience level might separate into patrols so that groups will be of a size that maximizes learning experiences. Troops with Scouts of various ages and levels of expertise could organize instruction at three levels—basic information for the new-Scout patrol, more advanced instruction for regular patrols, and the most challenging level for members of the Venture patrol.

Instruction should be hands-on learning rather than lecturing. Those leading the sessions can be troop instructors with expertise in a particular area, adult Scout leaders, or outside experts willing to share their knowledge with the troop. (For more on the position of instructor, see chapter 3, "The Boy-Led Troop.")

4. Patrol Meetings (5–20 Minutes)

At the conclusion of skills instruction the senior patrol leader will announce that it is time for each patrol to go to its designated meeting area, usually in the same room (or outdoor area) as the troop meeting. Each patrol leader takes charge of his patrol's meeting.

Matters to be handled during a patrol meeting include taking attendance, collecting dues, planning the patrol's involvement in upcoming troop activities, selecting menus for hikes and campouts, assigning patrol members to specific tasks, and working out any other details for the smooth operation of the patrol. The length of the patrol meetings will depend upon how much business the patrols must handle.

Many Scoutmasters take advantage of the time that Scouts are busy with patrol meetings to conduct one or more Scoutmaster conferences in another part of the meeting area. (For more on Scoutmaster conferences, see chapter 10, "Advancement.")

5. Interpatrol Activity (15–20 Minutes)

Led by the senior patrol leader, this part of the meeting allows all of the patrols to interact with one another in a competition or in a cooperative effort. The activity might be a game that tests the skills Scouts are learning for an upcoming activity—a race by each patrol to set up a tent properly, for example, or for patrol members to tie a set of knots correctly. (For more on cooperative and competitive activities, see "Games" in *Troop Program Resources.* The *Project COPE* manual also contains many appropriate games and challenges.)

Scouting is not a spectator sport. A meeting should move along at a quick pace and maintain the interest of the Scouts. If the senior patrol leader feels a portion of a meeting is lagging or that it has served its point, he may encourage the Scouts to conclude that segment and move on.

6. Closing (5 Minutes)

The closing is the Scoutmaster's portion of the meeting. The Scouts should be paying attention. It might help to dim the lights and have everyone seated. Deal with any outstanding business first—reminders for upcoming meetings, outings, etc. Congratulate any Scouts who have advanced since the last meeting. This is also a good time to praise Scouts for Good Turns or any other jobs well done.

The heart of the closing is the Scoutmaster's Minute—your opportunity to share a story based on Scouting's values. Use a personal experience if you can, or one of the many Scoutmaster's Minutes found in *Troop Program Resources*. The story should contain a thought for the Scouts to carry home with them. The closing can also include a simple ceremony, a song, or a prayer.

7. After the Meeting

At the end of the meeting, the service patrol for the week puts away any troop equipment and returns the room to its original arrangement and condition.

Evaluating Troop Meetings
How do you know if a troop meeting was successful? After the meeting, guide the patrol leaders' council in a discussion that reflects on these questions:
• Did we accomplish a purpose?
• Was the meeting fast paced and fun?
• Was the meeting well attended?
• Did we do something new and different?
• What worked well that we can do again?
The answers to these questions will help the troop's junior leaders as they refine the plans for future meetings.

Meanwhile, the senior patrol leader should meet briefly with members of the patrol leaders' council and the Scoutmaster to review the meeting, go over the plans made at the patrol leaders' council meeting, and decide which patrol will be the upcoming service patrol.

TROOP MEETINGS AND PROGRAM FEATURES

Troop meetings are usually built around monthly program features such as hiking or camping, and an exciting portion of each meeting is the skills instruction that prepares Scouts for challenging troop activities based on a program feature. (For descriptions of program features and explanations of ways to incorporate them into troop meetings, see chapter 6, "Program Features.")

THE NEW TROOP'S FIRST MONTH

Scoutmasters of newly established troops can use the following troop meeting plans to get the troop off to a good start. The troop meeting plans for the first four meetings are organized according to the same "Seven-Step Troop Meeting Plan" used by more experienced troops, but take into account the fact that members and leaders of a new troop might be unfamiliar with the basics of Scouting.

Scoutmasters of new troops will find that they must play the leading role in organizing and running the first meetings. Before long, though, they should be able to begin turning over leadership responsibilities to members of the new troop's patrol leaders' council.

The initial meetings of a new troop should be carefully planned to provide boys with a lot of fun, some learning, and the beginnings of an organizational structure. The "Tips for Effective Troop Meetings" listed earlier are just as valuable for a new troop as for one that has been in existence for years.

THE NEW TROOP'S FIRST MEETING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Play "Jump the Shot." You will need a rope at least 10 feet long, with a soft weight tied to the end. An old sock with sand in it is ideal. Form the boys in a circle and swing the weight below knee level. If a boy is hit by the rope or weight, he is given a penalty point. The boy with the fewest penalty points wins.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	Form the boys in a line facing the U.S. flag, and have them say the Pledge of Allegiance. Explain that they salute by placing their right hand over their heart, but when in Scout uniform they will salute the flag with the Scout salute.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	Announce the date, time, and place for the upcoming troop hike. Discuss and display the proper clothing and footgear to wear on the hike.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Divide the boys into temporary patrols of about six each. Explain that these are not permanent patrols. Have each patrol work on the Scout badge requirements. Collect new-member applications and fees.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources*. Pick a game that will require teamwork within each patrol.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	Make announcements such as upcoming meetings and activities. Wind down the meeting with a Scoutmaster's Minute selected from *Troop Program Resources*. Close with a thought that the boys will take home with them.	SM	
After the Meeting	Put the meeting area back in order. Meet with selected boys to make assignments for next week.		

THE NEW TROOP'S SECOND MEETING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Play "Dodgeball" (outdoors, if possible). Have the Scouts form a circle with one boy in the center. The object is to hit the boy in the center with a volleyball, using a two-handed, basketball-type pass. When hit, he is replaced in the center by the boy who hit him.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	Form the Scouts in a line. Have them give the Scout sign and say the Scout Oath. Read the Scout Law and have the Scouts repeat each point after you.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	In preparation for the upcoming hike, give a presentation on the food and water needed. Show foods that are easy to pack and simple to prepare, such as prepackaged foods and fruits. Show how to prepare trail mix, then share the mix with the Scouts. Emphasize the need for adequate water.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Have the Scouts work on learning the Scout Oath and Law.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources.*		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	Set up an artificial campfire and dim the lights. Explain the patrol method and how it works. Ask each Scout to write the names of five or six Scouts he would like to have in his patrol. Announce more details of the hike. Give the Scout benediction, found under "Ceremonies" in *Troop Program Resources.*	SM	
After the Meeting	Put the meeting area back in order.		

THE NEW TROOP'S THIRD MEETING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Play "Fishnet" from *Troop Program Resources.*		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	Have the Scouts form two lines, facing each other. Have one Scout advance the U.S. flag between the two lines while the other Scouts salute as the flag comes down the line. When the flag bearer reaches the end of the line, he makes an about-face and stands facing the two lines. The Scouts hold their salute and give the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	Explain the job of senior patrol leader. Explain that he is the Scout who will direct most of the troop's activities. Tell the Scouts that whomever they elect, he will serve for six to 12 months, then there will be another election. Give a slip of paper to each Scout and have him write down his choice for senior patrol leader. While the ballots are being counted, announce the formation of the new patrols, which were the results of the boys' choices from last week. Announce the outcome of the election for senior patrol leader.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Provide slips of paper for ballots so that each patrol can conduct an election for patrol leader. This individual will be elected for a six-month term. Patrols should select a patrol name and start designing a patrol flag and developing a patrol yell.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Have a patrol scavenger hunt. Give each patrol leader a list of 10 to 12 items, and set a 10-minute time limit. The only rule is to stay on the grounds of the Scout meeting. Items could include a paper clip, handkerchief, library card, picture of a baby, oak leaf, acorn, brown shoelace, wooden pencil, nail clippers, and anything else that comes to your mind. Recognize the winning patrol and be sure to allow time for the items to be returned.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	Make announcements about the upcoming hike. Emphasize the importance of the patrol method and explain the patrol leaders' council and how it works. Explain that each patrol is a team. They must work together to be successful—everyone must share in the jobs to be done. Have the Scouts stand in a circle, give the Scout sign, and say the Scout Law.	SM	
After the Meeting	Have the troop members put the meeting area back in order. Hold a short meeting of the newly elected patrol leaders' council, and announce the date, time, and place of your first patrol leaders' council meeting (which should occur before the outdoor activity).		

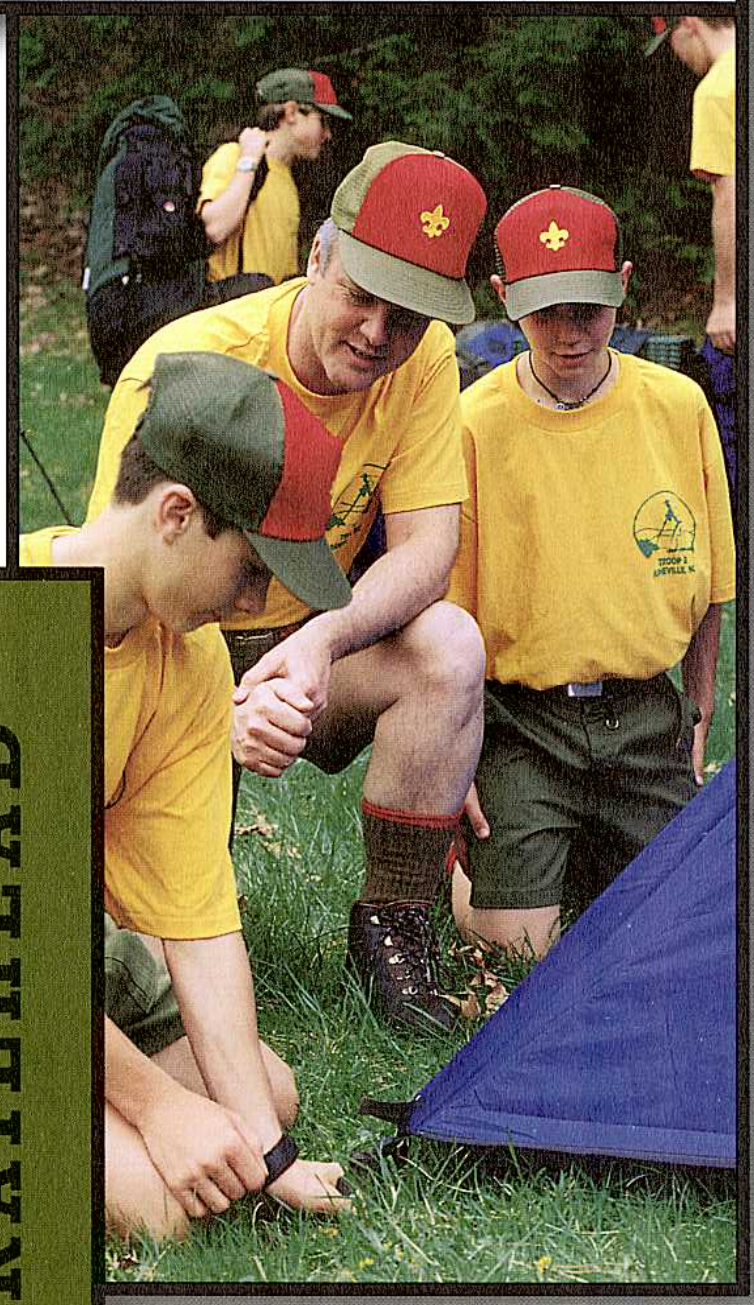
THE NEW TROOP'S FOURTH MEETING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources.*		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	The senior patrol leader forms the troop in a line, and leads the Pledge of Allegiance.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	If this is the final meeting before the hike, have a run-down on last-minute details, such as times of departure and return, food, and clothing. Invite the Youth Protection chair to show the video *A Time to Tell.*		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Patrols should plan food and water for the hike and make specific assignments. The patrol leader should announce who will serve in patrol jobs. The patrol scribe should take roll and collect dues.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources.*		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	Remind the Scouts of the date and times for the upcoming hike. Commend the newly elected patrol leaders' council for exceptional jobs. Use a Scoutmaster's Minute from *Troop Program Resources.*	SM	
After the Meeting	Put the meeting area back in order, and have a patrol leaders' council meeting to make assignments for the next meeting. Assign patrols to serve as the program patrol (ceremonies) and the service patrol (setup and takedown).		

PROGRAM FEATURES



TRAILHEAD

6

PROGRAM FEATURES

MONTHLY PROGRAM FEATURES allow a troop to center its meetings and events around well-planned activities that Scouts will find challenging and exciting. At its annual program planning conference, the patrol leaders' council selects program features for the coming year. Volumes I, II, and III of *Troop Program Features* contain meeting outlines and instructional materials for over three dozen program features. Program features are also included in Scoutmasters' copies of *Scouting* magazine. This chapter includes detailed troop meeting plans for four of the features: Hiking, Citizenship, First Aid, and Camping.

MONTHLY PROGRAM FEATURES	
Aquatics	Hiking
Athletics	Hobbies
Backpacking	Leadership
Boating/Canoeing	Mechanics
Business	Nature
Camping	Orienteering
Citizenship	Physical Fitness
Communications	Pioneering
Cooking	Public Service
Cultural Awareness	Safety
Emergency Preparedness	Science
Engineering	Shooting
Environment	Special Cooking
First Aid	Sports
Fishing	Tracking
Forestry	Wilderness Survival
Health Care	Wildlife Management
High Adventure	Winter Camping

HIKING PROGRAM FEATURE

"SCOUTING* IS THREE-QUARTERS *-OUTING."
Anyone who has been around the BSA very long has heard that saying. Hiking, camping, and other outdoor activities are the heart of Scouting's attraction for boys. Spending plenty of time outdoors will help every troop succeed.

The hiking program feature concentrates on hiking skills. It also offers Scouts opportunities to learn other outdoor lore. As they prepare for hikes and set out on the trail, younger Scouts can work on a variety of requirements for the ranks of Tenderfoot through First Class. Older Scouts will be able to tackle some of the requirements for a number of outdoor-related merit badges.

The troop's big event for the month will be a trail trek—a hike of at least five miles in territory unfamiliar to the Scouts. As the patrol leaders' council is planning a hike, they might want to figure out some special activities to do along the way—nature study, map and compass use, or some other skill Scouts will enjoy. The destination of a hike can suggest activities, too—fishing in a lake or stream, cooking a meal over a camp stove or open fire, reaching the top of a high hill, or pitching in to help with a conservation project.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

The hiking program feature should give your Scouts

- Improved physical fitness
- Growth in skill and confidence in their ability to take care of themselves on the trail
- A sense of communion with nature and God
- Greater appreciation for the outdoors and a strong determination to follow the Outdoor Code

- Increased understanding of and commitment to Leave No Trace methods of hiking (For the "Principles of Leave No Trace," see the *Boy Scout Handbook* or chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program," in this book.)

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, the Scouts should have had opportunities to meet the majority of their basic hiking requirements through First Class rank. Depending on the activities that occur during the hike, they might also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—hiking, cooking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, map and compass, hiking, identifying wild animals
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—finding directions, orienteering, identifying native plants
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges

Older Scouts can concentrate on completing most of the requirements for the Hiking merit badge and can help younger Scouts prepare for the troop hike. Boys with backcountry experience might also wish to fulfill various requirements for Camping, Cooking, Orienteering, Backpacking, Pioneering, Wilderness Survival, and other nature-related merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents and guardians in the hiking program feature by

- Inviting them on the troop trail trek
- Asking qualified parents and guardians to help with instruction in hiking skills and Leave No Trace techniques
- Arranging with parents and guardians to provide transportation to and from the starting point of the hike

HIKING BOOTS

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should have met in the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If they didn't complete all of the items on the following agenda, they can continue planning at brief patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide on the route and destination of the troop hike.
- Review the skills Scouts must have for a successful hike.
- Discuss Leave No Trace principles that apply to hiking.
- Choose a highlight activity for the hike—orienteering, cooking a trail meal, etc.
- Make a list of equipment needed for the hike and determine how it will be acquired.
- Consider inviting a Hiking, Backpacking, or Orienteering merit badge counselor to help with skills instruction at troop meetings.
- If permits or other forms of permission will be required to hike on public or private land, they should be arranged by the Scoutmaster, a member of the troop committee, or another adult leader.

BIG EVENT

The Trail Trek

A troop trail trek can have a triple-barreled objective: to provide fun and adventure for Scouts, to help them meet hiking requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class ranks, and to offer other opportunities for advancement with activities along the route and at the destination.

Match the trek to the level of your Scout's experience. If most of the Scouts are young and new to the backcountry, a five-mile hike over fairly easy terrain is long enough. If the Scouts are older and more seasoned, a 10- to 20-mile hike over fairly rugged terrain could be about right. In all cases, Scouts should pack everything in—and out—including patrol equipment, food, and personal gear.

Ideally the route and destination should be unfamiliar to the Scouts so that they can use a map and compass to find their way. If feasible, each patrol might start from a different spot so that Scouts will not simply follow the patrol ahead.

Here are three highlight activities that can be featured at the destination of a hike:

Orienteering

During a hike, Scouts can practice taking compass bearings, identifying landmarks on their maps, and setting courses from one point to another. Refer to the *Boy Scout Handbook* for information on using maps and compasses.

The *Orienteering* merit badge pamphlet explains ways to set up orienteering courses and to conduct cross-country and relay orienteering challenges. An Orienteering merit badge counselor or members of a Venture patrol can set up a course ahead of time and have it ready when Scouts reach the destination of their hike. Another useful exercise would be to use triangulation at the end of a hike to determine the distance traveled.

Nature Lore

A nature study highlight might encourage Scouts to work on several rank requirements and on certain requirements for the following merit badges: Bird Study, Environmental Science, Fish and Wildlife Management, Geology, Insect Study, Mammal Study, Nature, Reptile and Amphibian Study, and Weather. Merit badge counselors and other experts in these fields could accompany the troop to provide guidance. Scouts can also carry field guides to identify plants and animals along the way.

Conservation Project

A conservation project can be a highlight of the troop trail trek. Because Scouts will spend more of their day hiking than working, a project should be small in scope, well planned, and coordinated with knowledgeable land managers. A key to successful conservation projects is thorough planning and guidance by experts.

(For project ideas and guidelines for carrying them out, see chapter 19, "Community Service," and "Conservation Projects" in chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program," in this book. The BSA's *Conservation Handbook* also contains plenty of information about ways Scouts can complete worthwhile projects on public and private lands.)

HIKING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 1**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	If it is dark enough, practice finding directions by using the North Star *(Boy Scout Handbook)*, or play "Indian Arm, Hand, and Leg Wrestling" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop into a horseshoe. • Hold a uniform inspection. • Repeat the Scout Oath. • Repeat the Pledge of Allegiance.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice reading a compass and learn how to set a pace *(Boy Scout Handbook)*. Begin working on Leave No Trace hiking skills. • Experienced Scouts review the selection of gear and footwear for hiking, and begin planning the troop trail trek. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or study a topographic map of the troop trail trek destination in order to lay out an orienteering course.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for the hike this month and make sure everyone knows what his assignments are and what to bring for the outing. Any Scouts who have not been hiking yet will need some extra help. All other patrols plan activities to work on advancement. Plan any meals that will be needed for the outing. If it is going to be an overnight, begin to make plans for equipment distribution and tent needs.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Hot Isotope Transport" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Assemble the patrols and repeat the Outdoor Code. • Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

HIKING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 2**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice figuring the height and width of objects *(Boy Scout Handbook)*. Continue working on Leave No Trace hiking skills. • Experienced Scouts work on packing up for a troop hike and study maps of the trail trek route. Review Leave No Trace hiking skills. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review assignments for the hike. First-time hikers continue working on troop procedures for hiking. All other patrols continue to work on activities for advancement on the outing.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Roman Chariot Race" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Work on next month's program feature. The troop committee conducts a board of review. Plan a court of honor if one is needed.		

HIKING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 3**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice reading topographic maps and review what to do if lost *(Boy Scout Handbook)*. • Experienced Scouts plan a game for the troop to play during the troop trail trek. Use a topographic map of the hike's destination and lay out an area in which to play the game. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or help younger Scouts with map-reading skills.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Finalize the menu for the outing. Review clothing and equipment and make sure everyone knows what to bring. Go over the route to be hiked; consider potential weather conditions and how to prepare for them.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Ball-Over Relay" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

HIKING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 4**

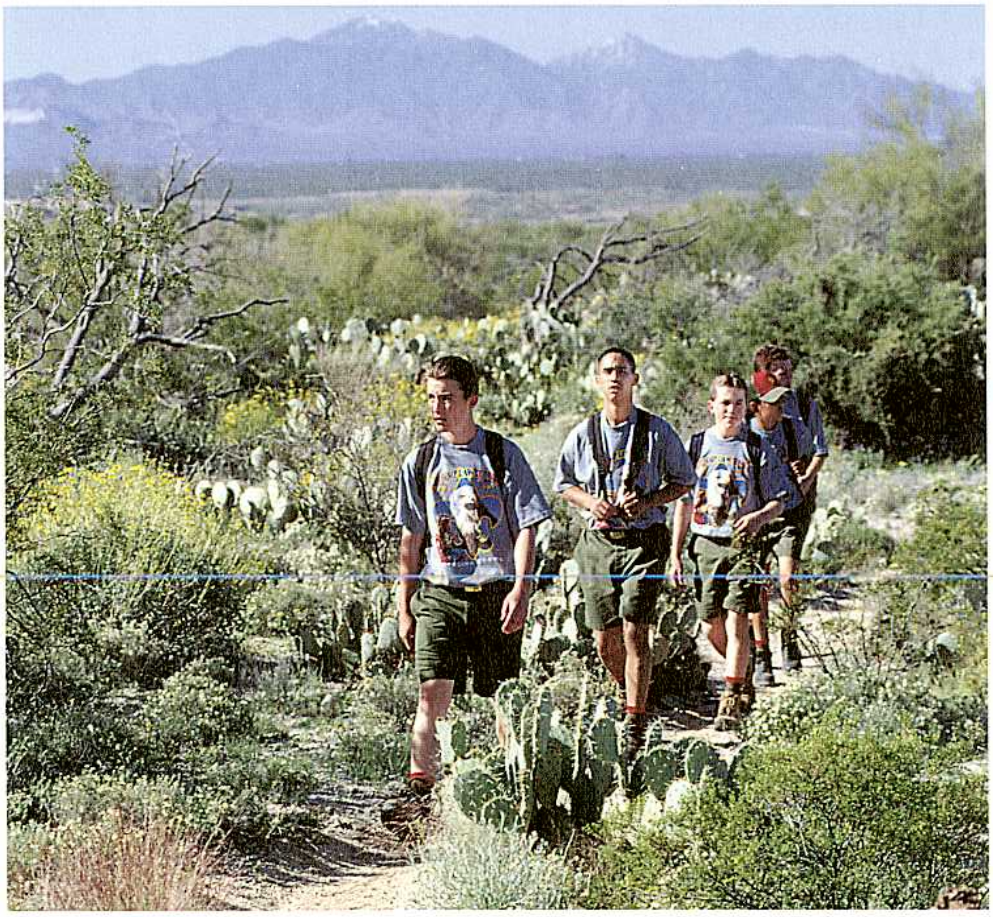
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice reading maps and taking bearings *(Boy Scout Handbook)*. Review Leave No Trace hiking skills. • Experienced Scouts bring in packs for a prehike inspection. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or assist in map-and-compass activities.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review plans and assignments for the hike. Make sure everyone knows the travel plans and equipment needs. Practice any interpatrol activities that will take place.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Run the "Human Obstacle Race" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and checks last-minute details for the troop outing. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

HIKING

SAMPLE TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Saturday 8:00 A.M.	Load gear at troop meeting location. Drive to starting point of hike.	SPL
8:30 A.M.	Patrol leaders organize the patrols, look over the maps, and review Leave No Trace hiking skills. Set out together on the hike.	PL
11:30 A.M.	Sack lunch.	
Noon	Continue hiking.	
Afternoon	Related activities—orienteering, nature study, etc.	SPL
	Begin hiking back to starting point, the patrols staying together and practicing Leave No Trace skills.	PL
At the end of the hike	Take a few moments to reflect on the day. Emphasize the value of the experience, and provide a sense of closure.	SM
	Store any troop equipment.	QM



Every Scout looks forward to hiking. Hitting the trail opens up a world of opportunities to learn, to explore, and to meet the challenge of the outdoors. Best of all, a hike is an adventure that Scouts themselves can plan, organize, and lead.

CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM FEATURE

A PRIMARY AIM of the Boy Scouts of America is to guide youth toward good citizenship. That goal is clearly expressed in the Scout Oath pledges of "duty to God and my country" and "to help other people at all times." The 12 points of the Scout Law are virtually a checklist for good citizenship.

The citizenship program feature is designed to heighten a Scout's appreciation of his rights and duties as a citizen, to make him aware of his heritage as an American, and to acquaint him with the approved ways of displaying and showing respect for the chief symbol of our country—the flag. The suggested troop meeting plans also include elements that apply to related merit badges including Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, American Cultures, and American Heritage.

As one highlight of the month, the troop could plan to attend a meeting of a public body such as the city council or school board, or a gathering of a private group that is concerned with the public welfare, such as a tenants' or homeowners' association or neighborhood block-watch group. (Obviously the troop schedule will have to be adapted to the schedule of the council, board, or group.) While planning the event, the patrol leaders' council can arrange for an official or officer of the group to answer questions after the meeting.

The troop's big event will be a heritage hike. The destination might be a historic site or trail in your troop's area. Or it could be a place that is significant to the heritage of your region—a wildlife refuge, an unusual geological formation, a zoo, or the location of an ethnic festival. The heritage hike can be a day outing or an overnight campout.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- A greater understanding of their duty to country and their obligation to help other people
- Awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens
- Some knowledge of their heritage as citizens of their community and nation
- Growth in self-confidence
- Increasing ability to work cooperatively with others in an outdoor setting

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have met the majority of their citizenship requirements through First Class rank. Depending on the activities, they might also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—hiking, camping
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges
Older Scouts should be able to complete some of the requirements for one or more of the Citizenship merit badges. Depending on activities during the month, they might also complete some of the requirements for American Cultures, American Heritage, Cooking, Hiking, Camping, and other outdoor-related merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents and guardians in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified parents and guardians to help with troop meeting instruction (Give special consideration to those involved in public positions—lawyers, history teachers, law enforcement officials, journalists, etc.)
- Inviting parents and guardians on the heritage hike
- Asking them to provide transportation for the visit to a community meeting or to and from the starting point of the hike

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should have met in the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If they didn't complete all of the items on the following agenda, they can continue planning at brief patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide which public body or private organization the troop will visit during the month. Assign a member to check on the date, time, and place of the meeting, and arrange to have an official meet with the troop either beforehand or afterward. (The patrol leaders' council may ask an adult on the troop committee to make these arrangements if that is more appropriate.)
- Make arrangements to invite a community leader to the second troop meeting of the month to discuss his or her work and to lead a discussion on the rights and duties of a citizen. The person could be a mayor, city council member, school board member, city attorney, judge, or the leader of a civic or service group.
- Make patrol assignments for the following troop meeting activities:
  - —Perform the opening and closing flag ceremonies.
  - —Give a presentation on the history of the U.S. flag.
  - —Report on the history or significance of the destination of the heritage hike.
  - —Lead a discussion on the *rights* of Scout-age youth—including the right to be protected from assault and theft, to inform authorities if someone is being treated unjustly, to use public facilities on the same basis as all other citizens, and to have adequate food and shelter. Also discuss the *duties* of young people, including the duty to attend school, to complete schoolwork to the best of their ability, to pay for public services on the same basis as other citizens, to avoid littering or damaging public and private property, and to follow traffic rules while bicycling. (See the *Boy Scout Handbook* for more ideas.)

- Make a list of possible patrol Good Turns for the community. (For ideas and guidelines, see chapter 19, "Community Service," and "Conservation Projects" in chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program," in this book. See the BSA's *Conservation Handbook* for more information about meaningful ways Scouts can complete projects on public and private lands.)

BIG EVENT

The Heritage Hike

As with most other Scouting activities, this big event should be fun. It should have an educational purpose, too, although not in a classroom sense.

The aim is to introduce Scouts to some aspect of their American heritage. It might be a historic site of local, regional, or national interest. It could be a place where Scouts can bask in America's beauty or be awed by the nation's natural wonders—perhaps a pristine lake, a wildlife refuge, a canyon or mesa, or an ancient forest. If this program feature occurs during a national holiday, your "hike" might take the form of participation in a parade, an ethnic festival, or other fitting event.

The big event can be a day outing or an overnight campout. Based on the patrols' interests, the patrol leaders' council should determine the distance to be covered and the location of the destination or campsite. An overnight stay increases the possibilities for Scouts to complete outdoor-oriented rank and merit badge requirements.

The senior patrol leader could assign a patrol the task of researching some facts about the heritage hike destination and reporting to the troop on its history and significance. For example, if the troop is going to a historic site, what can the Scouts expect to see? What happened at the site? This kind of advance information will enhance the experience for the Scouts, especially if there will not be a local guide at the site.

Historic Trail Hike

In most states Scouts can find historic trails marked and waiting for troops to enjoy. More than 250 such trails have been approved by the Boy Scouts of America for their historical significance and the condition in which they are maintained. For a list of these trails, contact your local council service center or the National Parks Service.

LEARNING THE PUBLIC'S BUSINESS

The troop meeting plan for week three suggests that the troop visit a meeting of a public body, a private organization that works for the public welfare, or some other agency or group that affects the lives of citizens. The goal is to show Scouts American democracy in action. Here are several possibilities:

- City council
- School board
- Municipal court
- County court for a naturalization ceremony
- Tenants' or homeowners' association or neighborhood block-watch group

At meetings of this type, it is essential that the presiding officer or other knowledgeable person meet with the troop either before or after the regular meeting to explain the proceedings. If not, the meeting's business might not make much sense to Scouts.

Check ahead of time with those in charge of the meeting to determine the expected length of the session. The meetings of some city councils and school boards can last for hours, much longer than the attention span of most boys. Arrange to have troop members attend a particular portion of the meeting that is most likely to hold their interest, and then have them quietly file out. The "public comment" section of a meeting is often lively and entertaining.

At the troop meeting following the visit, encourage Scouts to discuss what they saw and heard. Reinforce the idea that the meeting was a demonstration of *representative democracy*—the way Americans govern themselves.

OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

If the troop is using this feature around Memorial Day (last Monday in May) or Independence Day (July 4), the patrol leaders' council might want to observe the holiday by encouraging display of the U.S. flag or by taking part in local celebrations. The troop might march in a parade, assist at a ceremony, perform a public display of flag courtesies, or distribute fliers to remind residents when and how to fly the flag.

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 1**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Have a pair of experienced Scouts show how to fold and care for the United States flag *(Boy Scout Handbook)*.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop into parallel patrols. • Present the colors. • Sing the national anthem. • Hold a uniform inspection.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice raising, lowering, and folding the flag. Plan and rehearse an opening ceremony to use at next week's meeting. • Experienced Scouts visit a fire or police station to find out how they operate and what it takes to become a police officer or fire fighter. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or start planning the troop heritage hike. Consider planning several stops that are of historical importance to your community.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for a patrol outing this month. This outing could be a five- or 10-mile hike so that newer Scouts can work on their hiking skills. Or plan a patrol Good Turn. Consider working on items that Scouts need to advance to the next rank.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Rooster Fight" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Form the troop into patrols and sing "God Bless America." • Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 2**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts meet with an elected public official, either at the troop meeting place or in his or her office. Learn what the official does and how an election is conducted. • Experienced Scouts plan a simple community Good Turn project (chapter 19, "Community Service," in this book). • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or, if possible, prepare for a campout on the troop heritage hike.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Identify Scouts in the patrol who need to participate in flag ceremonies and Good Turn projects. Suggest activities that these Scouts can participate in to fulfill rank requirements.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play any of the "Steal-the-Bacon" games suitable for patrol teams (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Work on next month's program feature. The troop committee conducts a board of review. Plan a court of honor if one is needed.		

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 3**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• Visit a public agency such as a night court, city council meeting, or a school board meeting. • Find out how the agency fits into the economy of your community, the country, or the world. • See how the government operates.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes			
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes			
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop outing. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

CITIZENSHIP

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 4**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on projects related to citizenship. • Experienced Scouts review map-and-compass skills in preparation for the heritage hike. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity, assist with map-and-compass activities, or continue planning for the troop heritage hike (and campout, if approved).		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review plans and assignments for the historic hike. Make sure everyone knows the travel plans and equipment needs. Practice interpatrol activities.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources*. Pick a game that will require teamwork within each patrol.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and last-minute details for the troop outing. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

CITIZENSHIP

SAMPLE TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Friday evening	Load gear at meeting location; leave for campsite. Plan only a light meal en route.	SPL
	Arrive at campsite; off-load equipment. Set up patrol sites. Stow gear and set up camp. Prepare camp stoves for breakfast.	SPL/PL
Saturday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	
8:30–11:30 A.M.	Give patrol leaders a topographic map to lead a three- to five-mile hike. Scouts working toward First Class rank could take part in an orienteering race. Younger Scouts could take a nature hike.	SPL
11:30 A.M.	Sack lunch.	
Noon	Continue activities.	
4:30 P.M.	Start dinner preparation.	Cooks
5:30 P.M.	Dinner.	SPL
6:00 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
8:00 P.M.	Campfire.	
9:00 P.M.	Bedtime snack.	
10:00 P.M.	Lights out.	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Sunday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	
8:30 A.M.	Religious service.	
9:00–11:00 A.M.	Patrol games—use four from "Games" in *Troop Program Resources.*	
11:00 A.M.	Break camp.	
Special equipment needed	Topographic maps, clipboards, compasses, troop camping equipment.	

Match the difficulty of campouts to the ability levels of the Scouts. Early camping experiences that help young Scouts gain confidence and develop good outdoor skills can prepare them for more challenging adventures to come.

FIRST AID PROGRAM FEATURE

HAVING AGREED TO LIVE BY THE SCOUT OATH, Scouts pledge themselves to help other people at all times. Often, all that takes is an observant eye to spot a person in need of assistance, and then the kindness to lend a hand.

But sometimes, especially when somebody is ill or injured, being helpful takes skill and knowledge, too. That's why Boy Scouts have been learning first aid since the earliest days of the Scouting movement.

That's also why this program feature is so important. It will introduce Scouts to the know-how that could be vital in an emergency, and it will give them the confidence that comes with knowing they are prepared to act in situations requiring basic first aid.

Troop meeting activities should focus on first aid skills. Younger Scouts will work on first aid requirements for Tenderfoot through First Class ranks. Experienced Scouts will concentrate on the more advanced skills required for the First Aid, Lifesaving, and Emergency Preparedness merit badges.

The big event of the month will be a disaster day. Patrols will be confronted with mock emergency situations that will improve and test their first aid skill, decision-making ability, and teamwork. The disaster day might be the highlight activity of a weekend campout, or it can be held in a local park or shopping center as a public demonstration of BSA first aid.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- An understanding that the pledge "to help other people at all times" requires skill as well as goodwill toward others
- A good grasp of the fundamentals of first aid for life-threatening situations and for many less serious injuries
- Confidence that they will be able to act rationally in an emergency

Throughout this monthlong program feature, refer to the *Boy Scout Handbook* and the *First Aid, Lifesaving,* and *Emergency Preparedness* merit badge pamphlets for information on correct first aid methods.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have met the majority of their basic first aid requirements through First Class rank. If the disaster day is part of a campout, they might also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn, first aid
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Aid Kit

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn, first aid
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law
- Physical fitness—drug awareness

First Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, nature, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn, first aid
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges

Older Scouts can concentrate on the First Aid and Emergency Preparedness merit badges this month; they should be able to complete most of the requirements. If the troop has a campout in conjunction with disaster day, they might also complete some requirements for Cooking, Camping, Hiking, and Lifesaving merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

The patrol leaders' council can involve parents and guardians in the program feature this month by

- Asking qualified parents and guardians to help with first aid instruction
- Inviting them to the disaster day event
- Asking parents and guardians to provide transportation, if necessary, for disaster day

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should have met in the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If they didn't complete all of the items on the following agenda, they can continue planning at brief patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide whether or not the disaster day will be a stand-alone event or the highlight of a campout. Choose a site and ask an assistant Scoutmaster or troop committee member to secure any necessary permissions.
- Plan the mock emergency situations the patrols will face on disaster day or, if the patrol leaders' council wants the entire troop to be surprised by the mock emergencies, assign an adult leader to plan them. (Sample emergencies appear on the following pages.)
- Invite First Aid and Emergency Preparedness merit badge counselors to help with troop meeting instruction and to serve as judges of patrol performance on disaster day.
- Plan details of troop meetings for the month. Assign patrol demonstrations of the skills needed for disaster day.

BIG EVENT

Disaster Day

This big event can take one of several forms. It might be

- The highlight of a campout during which patrols are confronted with several unexpected situations requiring a search for "victims," administering first aid, deciding whether or not to transport the "victims," and if so, how to transport them properly
- A fairly simple afternoon exercise of first aid tests, either in a remote area or in town
- A public demonstration of first aid in a local park, shopping center, or other easily accessible area
- A surprise call at an unusual hour for the troop to mobilize and be prepared to handle first aid for the "victims" of a mock disaster

The patrol leaders' council should decide how to set up the disaster day. Whatever form they choose, the patrols will be presented with a series of first aid problems that are as realistic as possible. Use makeup on your "victims" to simulate real injuries. The victims can be troop committee members or Webelos Scouts from a nearby Cub Scout pack.

Make the emergencies as realistic as possible, too. If, for example, disaster day is held in a remote area and one of the victims is supposed to have fallen down a steep embankment and suffered a broken leg, that's where he should be found. You might want to have one of the victims lost as well as injured so that the patrols must organize a lost-person search.

First aid training and disaster day mock emergencies should be designed to teach Scouts the following steps for analyzing emergency situations and providing care:
Treat accident victims by performing these steps in this order:
1. Approach with care. Is the scene safe? Guard against being injured yourself.
2. Treat *hurry cases*—conditions that threaten a victim's life:
a. Stopped breathing
b. No heartbeat
c. Severe bleeding
d. Internal poisoning
As you begin treatment, send someone to call for help.
3. Treat every accident victim for shock.
4. Examine every victim for other injuries that might require first aid.
5. Plan what to do next. If help is coming, keep the victim comfortable. Watch for any changes in his condition and treat him accordingly.

Sample Disaster Day Emergencies

A disaster day exercise can be made up of a series of first aid problems. Patrols go from one scenario to the next, spending 20 to 30 minutes at each one.

Mock emergencies should be set up based on the first aid training Scouts have received during the month. The emergencies should reinforce what the boys have learned and give them confidence in their ability to provide appropriate emergency care.

For each problem there should be a knowledgeable adult or older Scout on hand who is qualified to assess the patrols' performance and to reinforce their knowledge. As Scouts complete their treatment of an accident victim, the resource person can help them understand what they did correctly and provide guidance on ways they can improve in the future.

Sample Emergency 1
A Scout who has been working on a conservation project on a hot, humid afternoon returns to camp to help with supper. Near the cooking fire, he suddenly becomes dizzy and nauseous, loses his balance, and falls. As he falls, his hand goes into a pan of hot grease. His face is pale and clammy, and he is barely conscious.

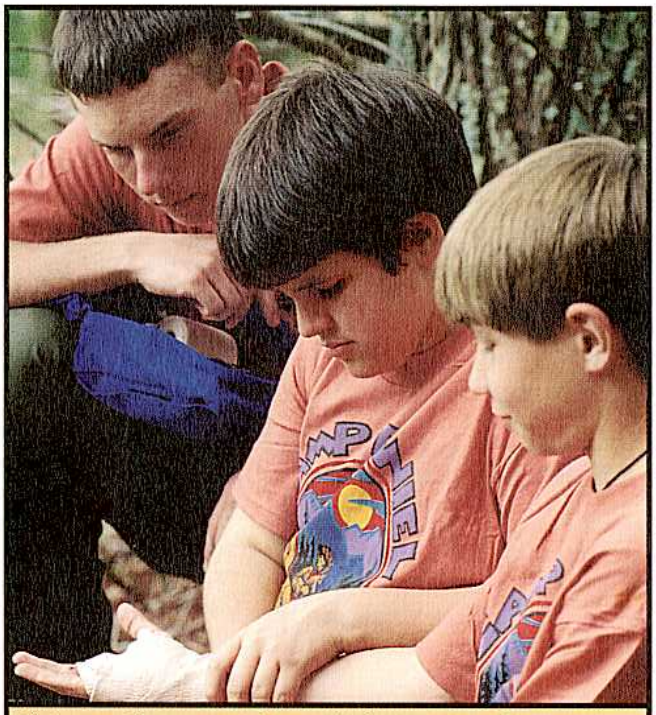
Sample Emergency 2
A hiker has tumbled down a steep ridge. Scouts find him with one leg bent under him and the ankle apparently deformed. A cut on his left wrist is spurting blood.

Sample Emergency 3
Scouts find a fisherman along the shore of a stream. He is having trouble breathing, is sweating heavily, and feels nauseous. He complains of an uncomfortable pressure in the center of his chest.

Sample Emergency 4
A boy is found unconscious near a large fallen tree branch. His right lower leg is bleeding and is turned at an abnormal angle. There is blood on his chest and face.

Sample Emergency 5
The victim is found sitting at the foot of a tree. He is holding his leg and says, "I've been bitten by a snake!" On his calf are two small puncture wounds about three-fourths of an inch apart.

Sample Emergency 6
A young boy is found wandering near a stream, mumbling to himself. His clothing is wet and he is shivering uncontrollably. Blood is oozing slowly from a wound on his head.



If the mock emergencies are being presented as a competition, use the following form to rate the performance of each patrol. Give a score of 0 to 5 for each of these questions:

	Patrol Score
1. Did the patrol act positively?	
2. Did the patrol leader supervise adequately?	
3. Did the patrol correctly identify injuries?	
4. Did each Scout do a specific job?	
5. Was the patrol's first aid correct?	
6. Was the victim treated for shock?	
7. Was the patrol correct in deciding whether or not to move the victim? If the victim was moved, was it done correctly?	
8. Was the call for help done properly?	
Total	

FIRST AID

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 1**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Have Scouts demonstrate first aid for shock or one of the "hurry cases" *(Boy Scout Handbook)*.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop into single-rank formation. • Hold a uniform inspection. • Repeat the Scout Oath and Law. • Repeat the Pledge of Allegiance.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on the Heimlich maneuver and on basic first aid for simple cuts, scratches, and blisters (or other appropriate first aid emergencies). • Experienced Scouts practice bandages and begin CPR instruction with a certified teacher. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or instruct younger Scouts in basic first aid techniques.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Patrols practice general principles of first aid. Plan activities to work on advancement. Those Scouts who have not completed their requirements for flag ceremonies and community service projects receive help in working on these.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "First-Aid Baseball" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Repeat the Scout benediction. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the disaster day. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

FIRST AID

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 2**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice first aid for minor burns or scalds (first-degree), frostbite, sunburn, and nosebleeds (or other appropriate first aid emergencies). • Experienced Scouts continue to work on CPR with a certified teacher. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or help younger Scouts with first aid basics.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review assignments for the disaster day event. Practice interpatrol activities.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Run the "Stretcher Relay" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop disaster day. Work on next month's program feature. The troop committee conducts a board of review. Plan a court of honor if one is needed.		

FIRST AID

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 3**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on basic first aid for insect bites or stings and for poisonous snakebite (or other appropriate first aid emergencies). • Experienced Scouts continue to work on CPR with a certified instructor. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or help younger Scouts with first aid.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Finalize the plans for the disaster day event. Make sure everyone knows the time and location for the event. Practice interpatrol activities.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Select a game from *Troop Program Resources.*		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and the disaster day event. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

FIRST AID

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 4**

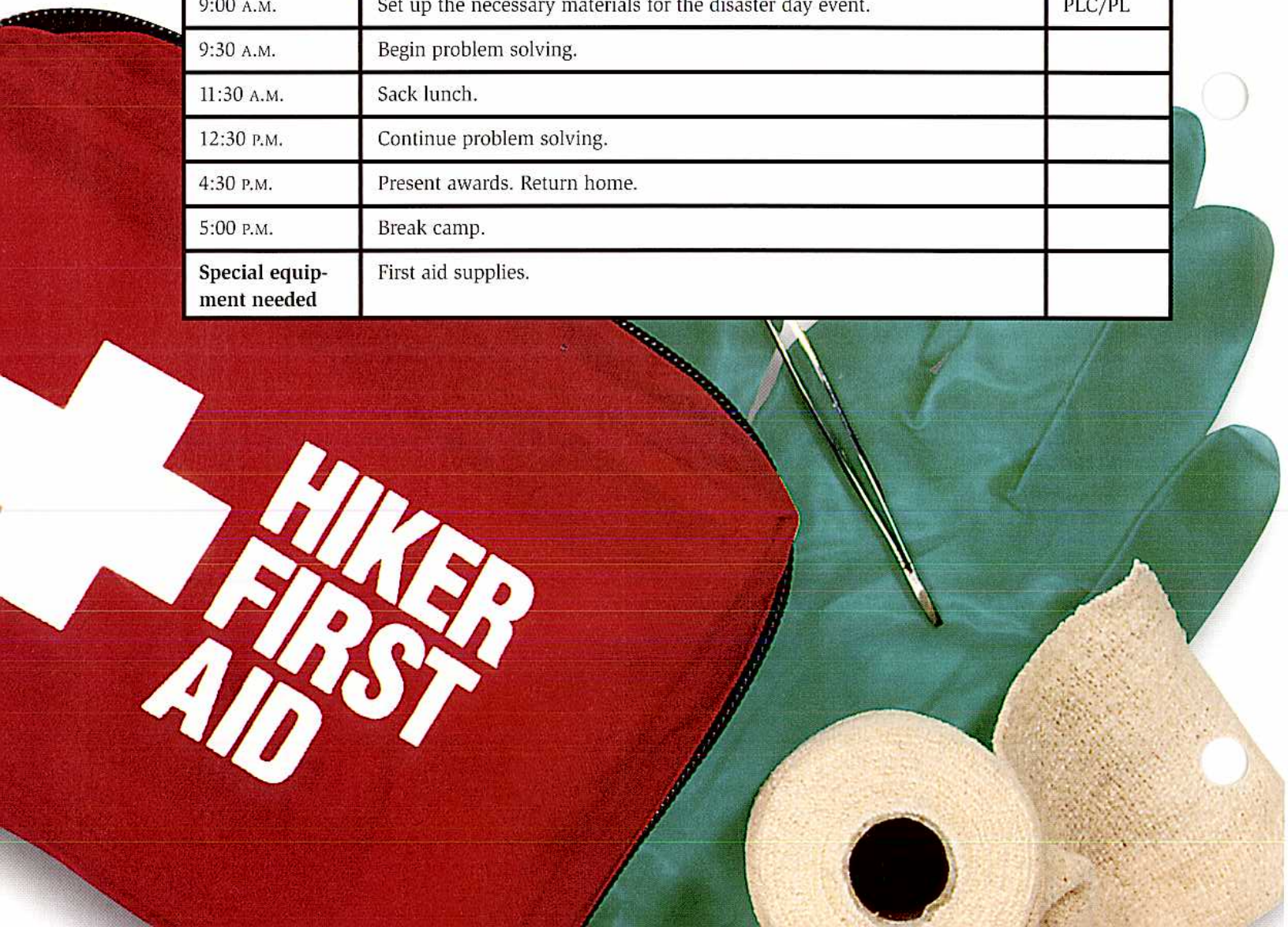
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts use "First Aid Problems 1–4" to test their skills (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*). • Experienced Scouts continue to work on CPR with a certified instructor. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or practice applying makeup to simulate injuries for the disaster day event.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Make sure everyone has the plans for the disaster day event. Practice any interpatrol activities that will take place.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Ice Accident" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and checks last-minute details for the disaster day event. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

FIRST AID

SAMPLE TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Friday evening	Load gear at meeting location. Plan only a light meal en route.	SPL
	Arrive at campsite; off-load equipment. Set up patrol sites. Stow gear and set up camp. Prepare camp stoves for breakfast.	SPL/PL
Saturday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
9:00 A.M.	Set up the necessary materials for the disaster day event.	PLC/PL
9:30 A.M.	Begin problem solving.	
11:30 A.M.	Sack lunch.	
12:30 P.M.	Continue problem solving.	
4:30 P.M.	Present awards. Return home.	
5:00 P.M.	Break camp.	
Special equipment needed	First aid supplies.	



CAMPING PROGRAM FEATURE

NOWHERE IS THE ROMANCE OF THE BSA more evident than in camp. Whether it's an overnight campout or a week at summer camp, an outdoor setting promises fun and adventure—two of Scouting's great attractions.

A troop that camps out almost every month of the year will have a strong appeal to Scouts. On the other hand, a troop that rarely gets outdoors might have trouble holding the interest of boys.

This month's program focuses on camping skills. Young Scouts learn the basics of living comfortably and safely in the outdoors. Older Scouts can hone their knowledge of essential skills and tackle more advanced campcraft. Everyone in the troop will master Leave No Trace camping methods so that they can live in the outdoors in ways that are kind to the environment.

The big event of the month will be a campout that encourages Scouts to improve their camping skills. The campout might have another emphasis, too—perhaps nature study, astronomy, conservation, fishing, or wilderness survival.

Consider hiking at least a few miles to and from the campsite. That will increase the sense of remoteness for Scouts and allow them to practice backpacking as well as camping. The patrol leaders' council should plan the campout to emphasize Leave No Trace camping methods outlined in the *Boy Scout Handbook*. The patrol leaders' council can also plan activities that will be enjoyable and enhance the troop's Scoutcraft skills. Add an evening program full of fun and inspiration to cap off this great outdoor adventure.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts

- The knowledge and skill to be comfortable in camp
- The ability to use Leave No Trace camping methods and the Outdoor Code to protect the environment
- A sense of communion with nature and God
- Growth in self-confidence
- The ability to work cooperatively with other members of the patrol and troop in an outdoor setting

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month all Scouts should have met the majority of their basic camping requirements through First Class rank. Depending on the campout activities, they might also complete all or part of the following rank requirements:

Tenderfoot

- Outdoor—cooking, camping
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—patrol identification
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Second Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

First Class

- Outdoor—cooking, camping, hiking
- Citizenship—flag ceremonies, Good Turn
- Patrol/troop participation—leadership
- Personal development—Scout Oath and Law

Merit Badges

Older Scouts can concentrate on the Camping merit badge this month, completing most of the requirements. Depending on activities planned for the campout, they might also fulfill various requirements for Cooking, Hiking, Pioneering, Orienteering, Wilderness Survival, and other outdoor- and nature-related merit badges.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

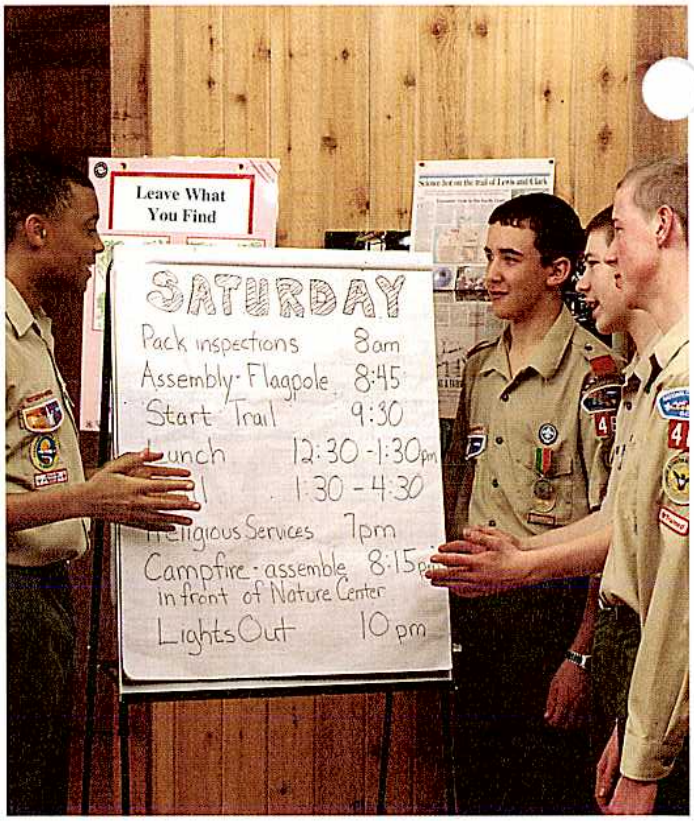
The patrol leaders' council can involve parents and guardians in the camping program feature by

- Asking qualified parents and guardians to assist with instruction for camping skills and Leave No Trace techniques
- Inviting parents and guardians to participate in the troop campout
- Asking them to provide transportation to and from the campsite or the starting point of the hike to camp

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The patrol leaders' council should have met in the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If they didn't complete all of the items on the following agenda, they can continue planning at brief patrol leaders' council meetings after each troop meeting.

- Decide on a campsite. If permission will be needed from private landowners or public land managers, they should be secured by the Scoutmaster, a member of the troop committee, or other responsible adult.
- Plan any special activities for the campout.
- If special gear or tools will be needed, assign someone to obtain them. Seek help from the troop quartermaster and, if necessary, the troop committee.
- Inventory the troop's camping equipment if this has not been done recently.
- Plan details of troop meetings for the month. Assign patrol demonstrations for the month, covering skills that will be needed for campout activities and Leave No Trace camping methods.



BIG EVENT

The Troop Campout

The primary purpose of this campout will be to make all Scouts feel at home spending the night outdoors. The patrol leaders' council should take special care to see that younger Scouts will have a good time, be comfortable in camp, and be enthusiastic about going camping again.

The event can take place at one of the troop's usual campsites, at the local council's Scout camp, or at a public park or forest. Plan for the patrol leaders' council or the troop's leaders to inspect each patrol's site to ensure that all Scouts are following Leave No Trace camping methods. Use the campout as an opportunity to recognize and praise good technique and to help all Scouts become responsible campers.

Campout Activities

The activity schedule of a campout will depend on weather, what the site has to offer, whether or not the Scouts are hiking to the campground, and the interests and needs of the troop members. Orienteering, nature study, fishing, pioneering—there are plenty of possibilities. A troop with many younger Scouts might plan instruction and practice in outdoor skills including campcraft, cooking, estimating heights and distances, safely handling woods tools, using maps and compasses, and so on.

To add spice to the practice, the patrol leaders' council could plan interpatrol competition in these skills. Try some of these contests from the "Games" section of *Troop Program Resources*:

- Blindfold Compass Walk
- Knot-Tying Relay
- Nature Scavenger Hunt
- Bow-Saw Relay
- Wet-Weather Fire Building
- String-Burning Race
- Remote Clove-Hitch Tying
- Flagpole Raising

Wide Games for Camp

If your campsite has a large wooded area, the patrol leaders' council might want to plan a wide game for the troop. Most wide games require up to a half-mile-square territory, and they last about 30 minutes. Several wide games, including "Capture the Flag," "Deliver the Message," and "Infiltration," are explained in the "Games" section of *Troop Program Resources.*

The Campout's Evening Program

A highlight of campouts is an evening program for sharing stories, songs, skits, and ideas. In areas where open fires are appropriate, a campfire can serve as the centerpiece of the program.

A troop's evening program during a campout should have elements of fun, inspiration, and good fellowship. It should leave each Scout with pleasant memories. The program need not be an elaborate production, but it does require planning. Evening programs usually last about an hour; it's better to end a program while Scouts are enjoying it rather than letting it drag on until they become restless.

Troops interested in swimming, canoeing, or other water activities must follow all points of the BSA Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat, explained in chapter 9, "The Outdoor Program," and in the *Boy Scout Handbook.*

A troop does not need a campfire to enjoy the evening. In fact, Scouts might find that their awareness of the surroundings is enhanced by the absence of a fire. Take advantage of the setting—sitting by a river, looking out over a vista, even gathering around a candle or lantern can be every bit as effective as gazing into the embers of a campfire. Always follow the campfire regulations of the area in which you are staying and employ all Leave No Trace standards relating to open fires.

The patrol leaders' council should take the lead in planning an evening program and assigning its various parts to the patrols. Scouts who have been to camporees and summer camp might have ideas for skits, stunts, and songs. The patrol leaders' council might also find it helpful to use the Campfire Program Planner and the *Troop Program Resources,* which contain information on planning effective evening programs.

As with all BSA events, an evening campout program must be in good taste. Adult leaders should reinforce the fact that there is no place in Scouting for poor manners; racial, ethnic, or gender slurs; or vulgarity.

CAMPING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 1**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Meet outdoors. Have new Scouts practice whipping rope. Other Scouts can work on splicing rope and lashings with Scout staves (*Boy Scout Handbook*).		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	• Form the troop into open columns of patrols. • Hold a uniform inspection. • Repeat the Outdoor Code.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on tying the half hitch, taut-line and clove hitches, square knot, and bowline. Play the "Knot-Tying Relay" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*). • Experienced Scouts work on shear, diagonal, and square lashings. Disassemble when done. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or study a topographic map of the troop campout area in order to lay out an orienteering course.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Discuss plans for the campout this month and make sure everyone knows what their assignments are and what to bring for the campout. Scouts in the new-Scout patrol need to know what support they will provide for the campout. Any Scouts who have not been camping yet will need some extra help. All other patrols plan activities to work on advancement. Patrol leaders should review the interpatrol activities that will take place and decide what skills need to be worked on.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Tangle Knot" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Form the troop into patrols. Call the patrol leaders forward to give patrol yells. • Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop campout. Begin work on next month's program feature.		

CAMPING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 2**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes	Meet outdoors. Have the Scouts practice pitching tents.		
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes	Recite the Outdoor Code.		
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts continue practicing tent-pitching skills *(Boy Scout Handbook* and *Fieldbook)*. • Experienced Scouts work on Leave No Trace camping methods and select some campsites based on a topographic map of the troop camping area. Play "Remote Clove-Hitch Tying" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity, serve as instructors for other Scouts, or prepare necessary items for merit badge work that can be done during the campout.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review assignments for the campout. First-time campers continue working on troop procedures for camping. All other patrols continue to work on activities for advancement on the campout. Practice interpatrol activities.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Hold a "Tent-Pitching Contest" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop campout. Work on next month's program feature. The troop committee conducts a board of review. Plan a court of honor if one is needed.		

CAMPING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 3**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts practice reading topographic maps and review what to do if lost *(Boy Scout Handbook)*. • Experienced Scouts work on first aid treatment for blisters, sprains, and other minor injuries possible during a campout. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or plan an orienteering course for the campout, using a topographic map of the camping area.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Finalize the menu for the campout and make sure everyone knows what to bring. Review clothing and equipment needs and collect any necessary fees. If you need to have a shakedown campout with your patrol or an outdoor practice for the patrol activities, schedule it now. Older Scouts might want to shoot photos or slides at the campout to add to your troop's scrapbook or to show at your next family gathering.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Blindfold Compass Walk" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources)*.		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and plans for the troop campout. Continue work on next month's program feature.		

CAMPING

TROOP MEETING PLAN

Date _____ **Week 4**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME
Preopening _____ minutes			
Opening Ceremony _____ minutes			
Skills Instruction _____ minutes	• New Scouts work on the safe transport, fueling, and use of camp stoves. Review Leave No Trace camping guidelines. • Experienced Scouts work on map-and-compass skills in preparation for the orienteering course laid out for the camping trip. Review Leave No Trace camping guidelines. • Older Scouts work on a Venture patrol activity or assist in map-and-compass activities. They might lead the review of Leave No Trace camping guidelines.		
Patrol Meetings _____ minutes	Review plans and assignments for the campout. Make sure everyone knows the travel plans and equipment needs. Go over the patrol duties roster. Practice interpatrol activities that will take place.		
Interpatrol Activity _____ minutes	Play "Swat 'Em" (under "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*).		
Closing _____ minutes Total 90 minutes of meeting	• Give the Scoutmaster's Minute. • Retire the colors.	SM	
After the Meeting	The patrol leaders' council reviews the next meeting and any last-minute details for the troop campout. Finalize work on next month's program feature.		

CAMPING

SAMPLE TROOP OUTDOOR PROGRAM PLAN

Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
Friday evening	Hike to campsite. Set up camp, stow gear, have an easily prepared meal.	SPL
Saturday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags.	
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	
8:30–11:30 A.M.	Patrol competitions (from "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*) • Blindfold Compass Walk • Knot-Tying Relay • Flagpole Raising • String-Burning Race	SPL
11:30 A.M.	Cooks prepare lunch.	Cooks
Noon	Lunch.	
12:30 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
1:30 P.M.	Patrol competitions (from "Games" in *Troop Program Resources*) • Remote Clove-Hitch Tying • Nature Scavenger Hunt • Roman Chariot Race • Capture the Flag	
4:30 P.M.	Start dinner preparation.	Cooks
5:30 P.M.	Dinner.	SPL
6:00 P.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
8:00 P.M.	Begin evening program.	SPL
9:00 P.M.	Bedtime snack.	
10:00 P.M.	Lights out.	
Sunday 6:30 A.M.	Cooks and assistants prepare breakfast. (Cooks should be working on First and Second Class requirements.)	Cooks, assistants
7:00 A.M.	Everyone else gets up. Take care of personal hygiene, air tents, and hang out sleeping bags.	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RUN BY
7:30 A.M.	Breakfast.	
8:00 A.M.	Clean up.	Cooks
	Patrols put up the gear for morning activities; clean up patrol site.	
8:30 A.M.	Religious service.	
9:00–11:00 A.M.	Patrol games—use four from "Games" in *Troop Program Resources.*	
11:00 A.M.	Break camp.	
Special equipment needed	Topographic maps, clipboards, compasses, troop camping equipment.	

NOTES